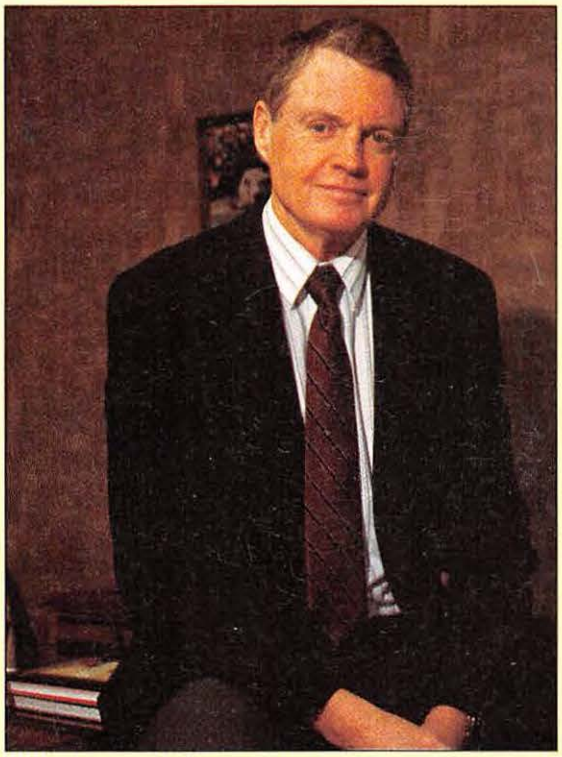
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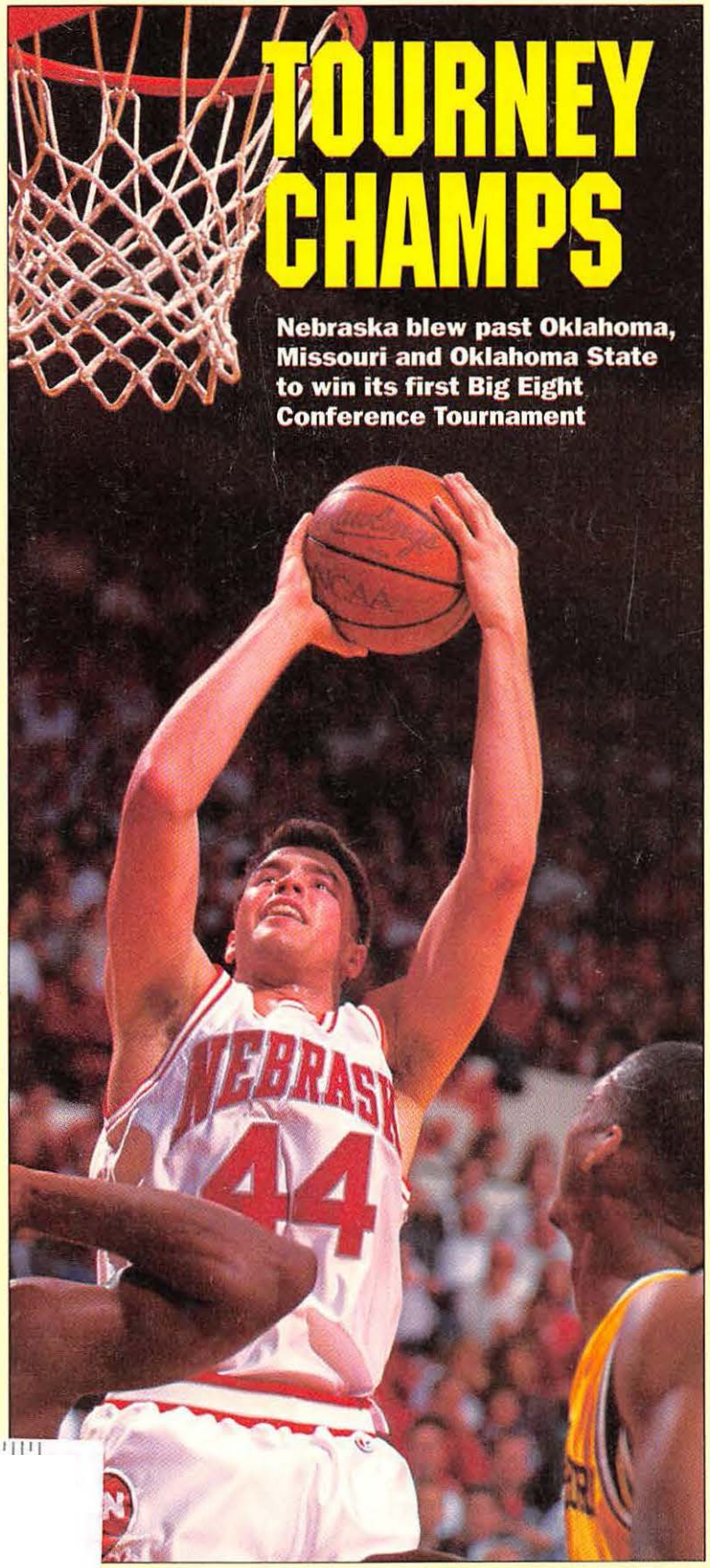
INSIDE:

Building A Big Eight Beast
Danny Nee has taken NU's basketball program from virtually unknown to nationally recognized

Football Quicks
News from inside the football camp

Coming Into Focus
A look at which players could be seeing action this spring from the 1993 football recruiting class

1994 NCAA Tournament Bracket



TOURNEY CHAMPS

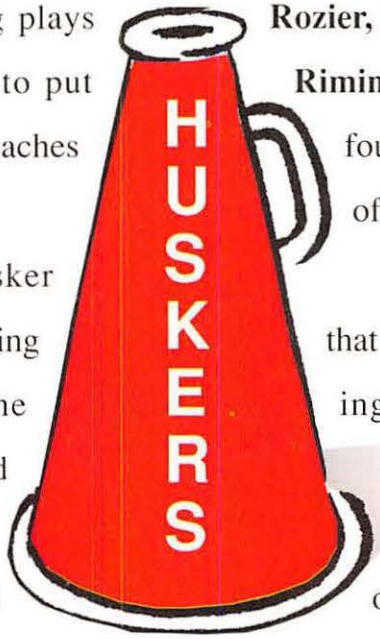
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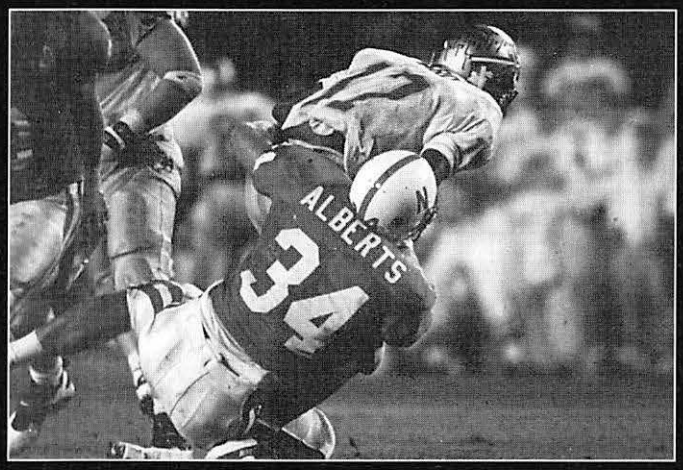
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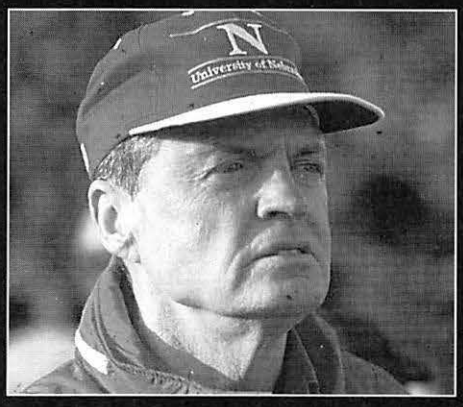
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Huskers Illustrated

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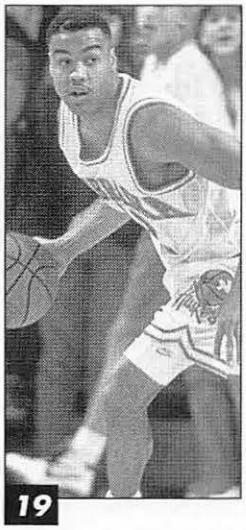
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Only I-back Lawrence Phillips of last year's recruiting class saw any significant playing time. But coaches expect that to change this year as many from the Class of 1993 challenge for playing time.
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NEXT ISSUE

In the April/May issue, which will be mailed the last week of April, we will take an in-depth look into the addition of four Southwest Conference teams to the Big Eight (or 12), plus we'll look at spring practice.



TALKING ABOUT FEBRUARY

Congratulations on the February 1994 edition. It was the best. We were at the Orange Bowl and stayed at the Bal Harbor with the team and your observations and articles were very accurate. The front cover is one that should be made into a poster. It says it all for the 1993 team.

I think it is important for the Nebraska fans to get to know the players and coaches as they are off the field. Your magazine does that. Keep it up.

An interesting thing happened after the Orange Bowl. We were standing in the lobby of the Bal Harbor talking to a couple of the players, and an Orange Bowl official still wearing his orange jacket came up to us and congratulated the players on an outstanding game. He then said, "I know it is no consolation, but you guys got screwed."

The score will always be 18-16, but we all know who won. We also attended Tom Osborne's 200th victory dinner in Lincoln (see page 10 of this issue). It is a good thing Bobby Bowden is a football coach (at Florida State) because he would never make it on the banquet circuit as an after dinner speaker.

Let's just wait until 1994 when the team takes the field and will be great.

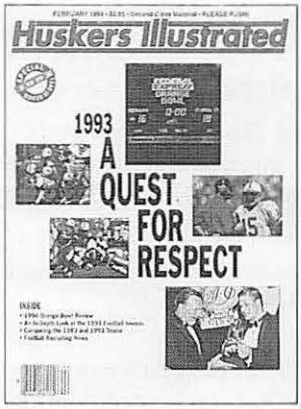
Rich Rehnberg
Holdrege, Neb.

I have been a subscriber since the inception of ***Huskers Illustrated*** and I would have to say that your February and March (1994) issues have been your best yet. They will stay on my coffee table well after my wife gets tired of them. Keep up the good work.

Terry Clinton
Omaha, Neb.

Your article "Best & Worst of the Orange Bowl Experience" (February 1994) was great. My sides hurt after reading it. It was definitely on par with David Letterman's Top 10 lists. I don't know if you meant for it to come across as humorous, but it definitely was. My favorite was "Biggest Sigh of Relief: No Husker fans were carjacked, stabbed, shot or mugged."

Stan Lewis
Augusta, Maine



Poster material? One reader thinks so.

If ever there was a true forecast in quotes it had to be former defensive tackle Kevin Ramaekers' in your "The Year in Rewind" (February 1994). He knew what he was talking about when he said after the 1993 Orange Bowl that the the Huskers would blow away teams in 1993 and make all the naysayers eat their words. Good for you Kevin.

Paul Hawkins
Clovis, N.M.

I've seen plenty of articles on how good the 1983 team was, but I thought it was interesting the way you compared it to the 1993 team. It was like one of those pieces which have run on ESPN that pit say the 1976 Pittsburgh Steelers against the 1993 Dallas Cowboys. I think the '83 team would win, but on a two-point conversion, 31-29.

Jimmy Truand
Oklahoma City, Okla.

How about adding "Best Performance in Filling Big Shoes" to the Best and Worst of 1993 article in your February issue. The award would go to fullback Cory Schlesinger who did a heck of job filling in for the departed Lance Lewis. The experience Cory got in 1993 should enable him to have one of the best fullback seasons in school history in 1994.

Tammy Williams
Lincoln, Neb.

TESTY QUESTIONS

I am one of those nuts that religiously follows high school recruiting. My wife thinks I should be locked up. But one thing that always throws me is when I read about athletes being one or two points short of making ACT scores. What is required?

Paul Spiegel
Reno, Nevada

SEEING DOUBLE

This is going to sound completely ridiculous, I know that going in.

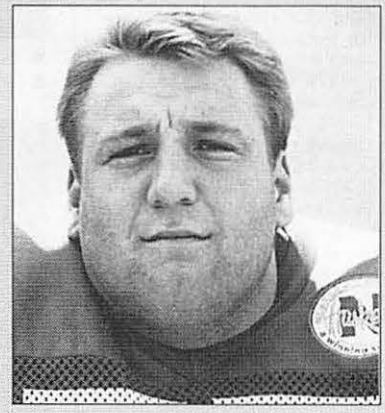
Early in the 1993 season you ran a feature on senior offensive tackle Lance Lundberg ("The Big Deal" - September 11, 1993). After reading the article I kept having this nagging feeling that I knew Lundberg from somewhere. Being 35, I knew that I hadn't gone to school with him or anything weird like that. I thought about everyone I work with and it still hadn't come to me. But I knew that I had seen him before.

My husband said I was probably thinking of an old boyfriend. As paranoid as my husband is, he was wrong.

Then one morning as I was getting our kids ready for school it hit me. They were watching their favorite morning show and there he was — Fred Flinstone. My husband, after he stopped laughing, said it was just because they were both big. Could you run their photos together and see for yourself.

Tracey Carroll
Dallas, Texas

Tracey, here are Lance and Fred. Sorry, but we don't see it. — ***Editor***





Paul, the NCAA requires a 17 on the American College Test, but an athlete may meet requirements without ever making a 17 via averaging. There are four sections (reading, math, etc.) on the ACT. An athlete can take the test six times.

For example, the best scores from each section are added together and divided by four. If the average comes to 16.5, it is rounded up to 17.

*As you might guess, that is why athletes should take the ACT (or the SAT) as early as possible. — **Editor***

CURRENTLY SPEAKING

I understand that football is the main focus of ***Huskers Illustrated***, but what I am wondering is why are the basketball records not as up-to-date as the football statistics? During the season, the football stats are as current as any other publication. That helps us out of state alumni keep up with the players and team.

But when it comes to basketball, there are always a few scores that are omitted. For example, in the February issue there was no final score for the Missouri-Kansas City (January 15), Colorado (January 19) or Missouri (January 24) games on the scoreboard (page 45). Why did that happen?

Steve Smith
Phoenix, Ariz.

Steve, we try to keep everyone, including our out of state subscribers, as up to date on scores and statistics as we can. But due to prepress and printing deadlines, we must work within a closing deadline that does not allow us to get every score into the book.

*For example, you pointed out three scores that were omitted. The February issue had to be completed by January 11, 1994 in order to make a January 24 print date. During football season we come out weekly which allows us to update the scores each week. With basketball playing two to three games a week we can not get every score in the book. Unfortunately, this is a problem that will always occur in one form or another with a publication that does not come out daily. — **Editor***

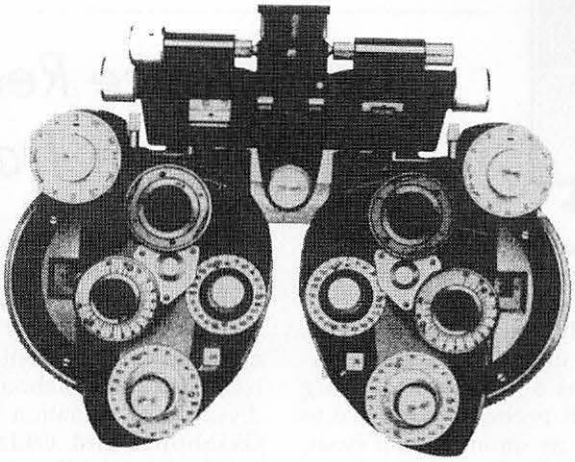
ALBERTS' NO.1 FAN

Trev Alberts should be the No. 1 pick in the NFL draft.

George Forrest
Chicago, Ill.

• • •

*Please send your comments and questions to **Letters**, P.O. Box 85211, Lincoln, Neb. 68501.* ■



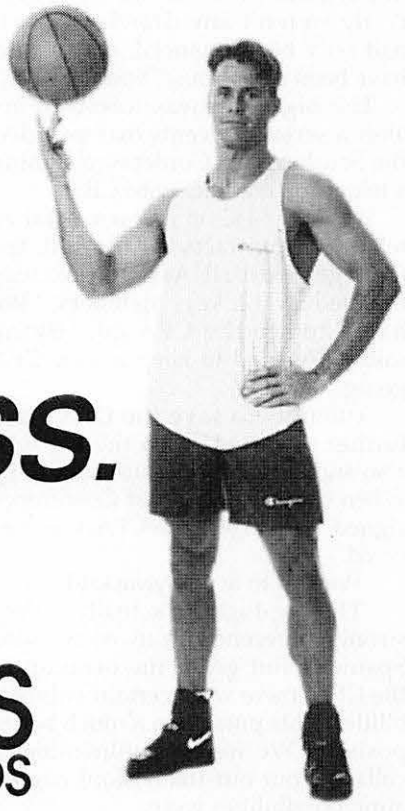
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By Mike Babcock

Conference Realignment Will Not Terminate Traditional Rivalries

It would be difficult to conceive of a football season in which Nebraska didn't play Oklahoma.

So even though the Cornhuskers and Sooners might end up in different divisions of an expanded Big Eight, they'll probably continue to play each other on an annual basis, Nebraska athletic director Bill Byrne said at a news conference to announce that Texas, Texas A&M, Texas Tech and Baylor will join the Big Eight in 1996.

"Almost all of the television proposals call for a Nebraska-Oklahoma game (annually)," Byrne said.

And television is a significant factor in the Big Eight's decision to add the four Southwest Conference schools. "Financial concerns are an important part of this," said Nebraska Chancellor Graham Spanier, who along with the chancellors at Iowa State, Kansas State and Colorado formed the realignment negotiating committee.

"But I don't want to minimize the importance of other factors. There really weren't any drawbacks. If it had only been financial, that would have been disastrous," Spanier said.

The Big Eight was forced to act after a series of events that included the Southeastern Conference signing a television contract with CBS.

With the SEC on its own as far as television contracts for football, the College Football Association was reduced by 12, key, members. "We hated to see the CFA go," Byrne said. "We tried to keep a mini CFA going."

Attempts to save the CFA were further thwarted when the Big East also signed a TV contract with CBS. When the Atlantic Coast Conference signed with ABC, the CFA was finished.

"We had to act," Byrne said.

"The Big Eight is actually a very strong conference on its own," said Spanier. "But given the breakup of the CFA, there were certain vulnerabilities. This puts us in a much better position. We weren't vulnerable to collapse, but our (television) negotiating possibilities were.

"With the 12-team conference, we can maximize the value of our product, and eliminate that worry of vulnerability," said Spanier.

The expanded conference very well could have a divisional alignment for football, which might put Nebraska and Oklahoma in opposite divisions. Speculation has been that Oklahoma and Oklahoma State would join the Texas schools in a southern division, with Nebraska and the five other current Big Eight schools in a northern division.

The divisional winners would then play a championship game, possibly in the Alamo Dome in San Antonio, Texas. Reportedly, such a playoff could be worth as much as $40 million in TV revenue to the conference.

With a divisional setup, only a few inter division games would be possible, on a rotating basis, which might mean some seasons Nebraska and Oklahoma wouldn't play each other.

But Byrne said that's not likely, that the television networks have stipulated Nebraska-Oklahoma and Texas-Texas A&M games annually.

Nothing has been finalized regarding divisions for football — or any other sport, according to Byrne, though "it looks like that would be wise (for football)," he said.

Byrne did not say how much the expanded conference might realize from television football contracts, but the *Lincoln Journal-Star* cited unnamed sources as setting the value at $70 million over five years.

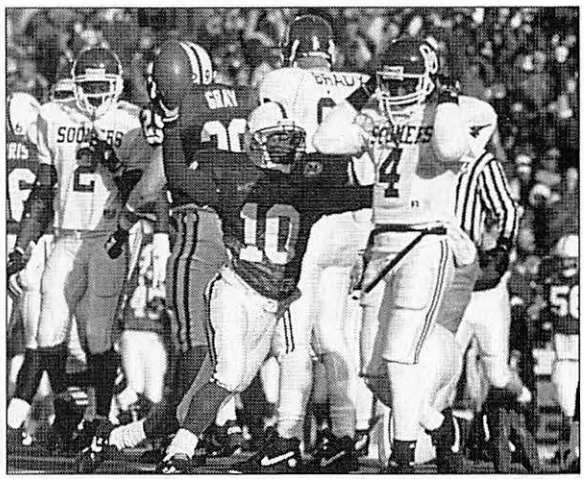
Currently, the Big Eight receives 10 percent of a CFA contract, or about $35 million.

"We have become a prominent national player," Byrne said. "We're going to be part of one of the premier conferences in the country."

In the wake of the announcement that the four Texas schools would join the Big Eight, there was speculation two other schools might be invited to join for a 14-team conference. Brigham Young and New Mexico are the schools most often mentioned.

The conference has copyrights on both "Big 12" and "Big 14," according to Byrne.

"I wouldn't say anything is final," Spanier said. "But the last few weeks, our thinking has been, 12 is an ideal number." Two more members might not add significantly to the value of the package.



Bob Berry

Even with the proposed divisional alignment the television networks have asked that the annual Nebraska-Oklahoma game continue.

"There's a point at which increasing the numerator and not the denominator doesn't work out," Spanier said. As it stands now, "we're going to come out remarkably well."

Now that the expansion is set, the lengthy process of working out the details can begin, Byrne said.

Among other things, the conference will attempt to work a bowl contract. The Big Eight's Orange Bowl contract and the SWC's Cotton Bowl contract both expire Jan. 1, 1995.

Charles Wilson, chairman of the Nebraska Board of Regents, described the addition of the four Texas schools as "proactive, a very positive step."

"Everybody considers this a great success," Spanier said.

And, it appears, it will be accomplished without discontinuing an annual rivalry that ranks among college football's best: Nebraska-Oklahoma. ■

By Mike Babcock

Huskers Take Big Step Winning First Conference Tournament Title

The impetus for the first Big Eight Tournament championship in Nebraska basketball history was a game against Oklahoma State in Stillwater, Okla., in mid-February, according to Cornhusker senior Jamar Johnson.

Nebraska lost the game 98-80. It was then "we realized there was a serious chance we wouldn't get in the NCAA Tournament," Johnson said.

The Cornhuskers regrouped, finished with three victories in their four remaining regular-season games, then swept through the Big Eight Tournament at Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Mo., as the No. 4 seed.

They defeated Oklahoma in the first round 105-88, behind a tournament and Nebraska single-game record 42 points from Eric Piatkowski.

They defeated top-seeded and third-ranked Missouri 98-91 in the semifinals, handing the Tigers their first loss to a conference team since March 2, 1993. Missouri went into the game with a 15-game win streak.

And they defeated second-seeded Oklahoma State 77-68 in the title game to earn an automatic NCAA Tournament bid, their fourth in a row, and reach 20 victories in consecutive seasons for the first time in school history.

"What can I say? I know I'm a part of Nebraska basketball history," Johnson said. "I think we're on the map. Nobody's going to be thinking: 'We're just playing Nebraska,' now, not if they take time to look."

"This is a big step for the Nebraska basketball program," said Cornhusker Coach Danny Nee. "It was a team effort. There is not one player on our team who did not contribute."

Piatkowski finished with a record-tying 76 points and was chosen as the tournament's most valuable player. He was joined on the all-tournament team by Cornhuskers Bruce Chubick and Jaron Boone.

Chubick pulled down 36 rebounds during the tournament, including 16 in the victory against Missouri. His total tied for third on the all-time list.

Boone scored 47 points in the tournament, including 36 in the final two games. Erick Strickland broke a tournament record by hitting 8-of-14 three-pointers, a .571 percentage.

Terrance Badgett; Tom Best, whose specialty was rebounding; Melvin Brooks, who scored five crucial points in the championship game; Jason Glock, Mikki Moore . . . each player added something to the title mix, emotionally if not statistically.

"Every team's got to make sacrifices. It's all about sacrifice," said Johnson, who led the team with 19 points against Oklahoma State.

Whatever it took, Johnson did. And he had only four turnovers, total, in the three tournament games.

Johnson carried the tournament championship trophy off the court after a celebration that included a large contingent of Nebraska fans.

In the semifinal victory, with additional support from Kansas and Oklahoma State fans, Nebraska seemed more the home team than Missouri.

"The crowd played a big part in supporting us all year. They have a part of this championship," Boone said.

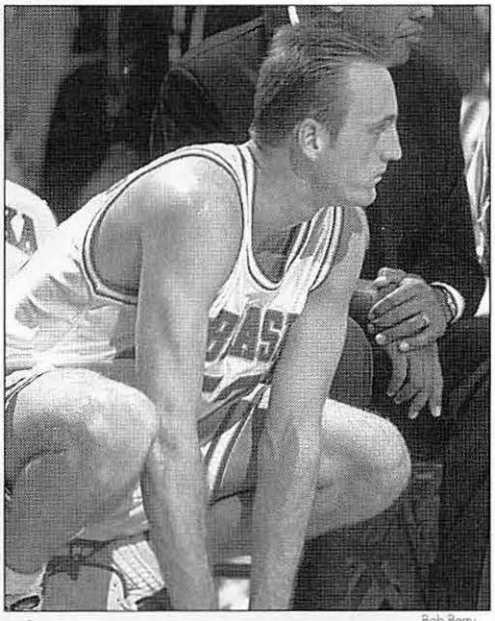
An estimated 5,000 fans were on hand at the Devaney Sports Center to welcome the Cornhuskers on their return from Kansas City Sunday night.

Nee, like Johnson, dated this season's turnaround to mid-February. The only difference was, he regarded a 115-111 overtime loss at Oklahoma as the symbolic turning point.

"Our players matured this season from Feb. 14 on," Nee said. "After that, we developed a mental toughness. After that, we made some mistakes, but we never faltered. That is a tribute to the individuals on our bench. When you go to your bench, magic things have to happen."

Like Brooks' rebound basket and three free throws during a 40-second stretch inside the final three minutes of the championship game to counter Oklahoma State's rally attempt.

"Melvin Brooks had a magic game," Nee said afterward. "Our bench was really of quality today. I don't think Nebraska could win without it."



Bob Berry

Senior Eric Piatkowski finished the Big Eight Tournament with a record-tying 76 points and was chosen as the MVP.

The tournament championship put Nebraska in the NCAA Tournament as the No. 6 seed in the East Region, where the Cornhuskers were scheduled to play Pennsylvania in the first round at the Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, N.Y.

"If you look back three weeks ago, people were saying: 'No way, NCAA. Maybe NIT,'" Piatkowski said.

Former Cornhusker Derrick Chandler, who had just returned from playing professional basketball in Spain, telephoned Johnson from Florida the morning of the first day of the tournament and "wished us luck," Johnson said. "I don't think he expected this. I'm sure he watched on television and was cheering us like he was here. He was probably surprised."

A lot of people were. But not the players themselves. ■

A CUT ABOVE THE REST

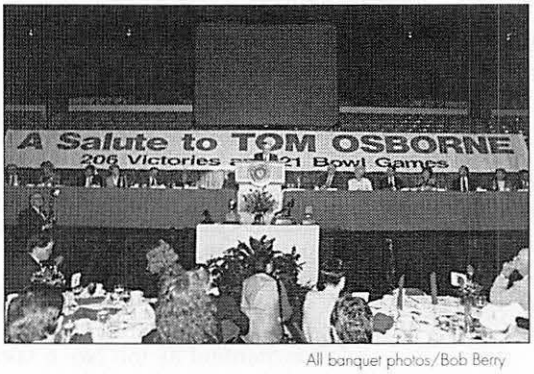


Dick Cavett, narrator of the video "Tom Osborne: 21 Years of Excellence," describes Nebraska's football coach of 21 years as "a man who has brought class and style to something that is sometimes thought of as just a rugged and tough sport."

Put another way, Osborne is indisputable evidence that nice guys don't finish last. Nebraska's nice guy has coached 206 victories, and still counting. He's one of only 13 major college football coaches who have achieved 200 or more victories, and one of only four currently active.

None of the other 12 reached victory No. 200 as quickly as Osborne.

At age 57, Osborne has established himself among the greatest coaches the college game has known. He already ranks with the legends: Bear Bryant, Amos Alonzo Stagg, Pop Warner, Joe Paterno and Woody Hayes.



All banquet photos/Bob Berry





Victory No. 200 came last season, with a 27-13 win against Oklahoma State in Stillwater, Okla.

On Feb. 3, 1994, Osborne was honored for that unique achievement at a soldout, $30-a-plate, fund-raising dinner in the Bob Devaney Sports Center arena. An audience of 1,500 honored the winningest active football coach, by percentage, in NCAA Division I-A.

"Just look at this group here," said Florida State coach Bobby Bowden, the featured speaker. "We'd have to have a football game in Tallahassee (Fla.) to get this many people together on a night in February.

"Football coaches across America and people outside of football have the same level of respect and admiration that I have for Tom."

Bowden, Osborne's friend and coaching rival, said of his Seminoles' 18-16 victory against Nebraska in the 1994 Orange Bowl game: "I don't know that we won it. I don't feel like we beat Nebraska. We outscored them."

The event produced more than kind words. A check for $250,000 was presented to The Osborne Endowment for Youth. The endowment was established three years ago by Osborne and his wife, Nancy, with $10,000 of their own money. It's purpose is to encourage junior high students to finish high school and further their education. Several youngsters who are benefiting from the endowment were introduced during the program.

In addition, Osborne was presented with a check for $10,000, with the restriction that it be spent selfishly, said Dan Cook, a long-time Cornhusker booster and generous donor who made the presentation.

Cook said, jokingly, the check would automatically bounce if Osborne attempted to give it away.

Osborne declined the organizing committee's offers of a new automobile or a fishing boat, said Cook.

Among the evening's speakers were Ben Nelson, governor of Nebraska; Woody Varner, former president of the university; Graham Spanier, Nebraska's chancellor; Trev Alberts, Nebraska's All-America and Butkus Award-winning outside linebacker; and Frank Solich, the Cornhuskers' assistant head coach.

An audience of 1,500 turned out for a banquet honoring the NCAA Division I-A's winningest active football coach — Tom Osborne.

Nebraska representatives wanted to give Osborne a boat for his achievement, but instead Osborne opted to have $250,000 donated (below left) to The Osborne Endowment for Youth fund which was established three years ago to encourage junior high students to finish high school and further their education.

Osborne and wife, Nancy, did accept a check for $10,000 (below middle) which was presented with the restriction that it be spent selfishly.

Featured speaker Bobby Bowden (below) told the crowd he didn't think his Florida State Seminoles won the Orange Bowl against the Huskers — they just outscored them.

WINNINGEST ACTIVE DIVISION I-A COACHES

1.	Tom Osborne	(NU)	206-47-3	(.811)
2.	R.C. Slocum	(A&M)	49-12-1	(.798)
3.	John Robinson	(USC)	75-19-2	(.793)
4.	Joe Paterno	(PSU)	257-69-3	(.786)
5.	Bobby Bowden	(FSU)	239-78-3	(.752)





The "21 Years of Excellence" video, produced by Jeff Schmahl, was shown for the first time. Cavett, a Lincoln native, narrated the 32-minute video, which is available for purchase (with footage from the banquet) through the Nebraska Football Office for $30.

Proceeds from sale of the videotape also will be donated to the Osborne Endowment for Youth.

Among those who speak on the video is Bob Devaney, Osborne's predecessor and a Hall of Fame coach. "I think he's a better coach than I was," said Devaney, now Nebraska's athletic director emeritus.

"Usually when people say this many nice things about you, you're dead," Osborne said when it was his turn to respond. "I'm one of the few who survived to hear it."

In a more serious vein, Osborne said: "Somebody calculated that for every dollar invested in young people, you save about $5 in terms of institutions, welfare, home shelters and battered children.

"We've got to start getting active because most don't really understand what's going on out there."

The video presentation includes a clip of Osborne saying that when he replaced Devaney, he figured he'd be doing well to last for five seasons. This fall, he will begin his 22nd.

He's had a remarkable coaching career, says Cavett, but "perhaps, the best is yet to come." ■

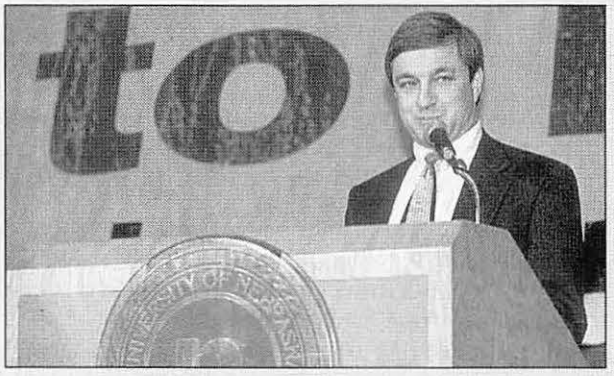
TOM OSBORNE'S MILESTONES

Victory No. 1	Sept. 8, 1973 (40-13 vs. UCLA)
Victory No. 50	Oct. 7, 1978 (23-0 vs. Iowa St.)
Victory No. 100	Sept. 24, 1983 (42-10 vs. UCLA)
Victory No. 150	Sept. 24, 1988 (47-16 vs. Arizona St.)
Victory No. 200	Oct. 7, 1993 (27-13 vs. Oklahoma St.)

MAJOR COLLEGE FOOTBALL COACHES WITH 200 OR MORE

Bear Bryant	323	Warren Woodson	203
Amos Stagg	314	Vince Dooley	201
Pop Warner	313	Eddie Anderson	201
Joe Paterno	257	Hayden Fry	200
Woody Hayes	238		
Bo Schembechler	234		
Bobby Bowden	239		
Jess Neely	207		
Tom Osborne	206		

THE TOP 10 REASONS NEBRASKANS LOVE TOM



Among the evening's many highlights was a humorous list of the Top 10 reasons Nebraskans love Tom Osborne, as compiled by Nebraska Chancellor Graham Spanier (right).

10. Continues to buy the *Omaha World-Herald* despite having to read in the "From the Grandstand" column such jokes as: "Why does it take Tom Osborne two hours to drive between Lincoln and Omaha? Because he doesn't believe in passing."

(The Omaha newspaper's letters column often includes several that are critical of Osborne's offense.)

9. Used to be a wild and crazy guy but to fulfill a promise to Nancy to calm down actually wrote a doctoral dissertation titled: "The effects of instruction on situational anxiety level and examination performance."

8. Is so popular that more than 1,100 people have claimed to have graduated from Hastings College with Tom, even though officials at Hastings tell me there were only 206 in the graduating class.

(Osborne attended both high school and college in Hastings, Neb.)

7. Has so much integrity that when Jeff Gillooly, Tonya Harding's husband, called Tom two days before the Orange Bowl with an offer to do something to Charlie Ward's knees, Tom emphatically said, "No." (Although he did confer with athletic director Bill Byrne and compliance director Al Papik about whether there was any way, under NCAA rules, that this might be legal.)

6. Shows courage by being the only person in Nebraska brave enough to order a vegetable plate at meetings of the Beef Club and Cattlemen's Club.

5. Is such a fashion plate that he is considering developing a line of his own ties in 10 shades of solid red.

(Cornhusker basketball Coach Danny Nee has his own line of designer silk ties. Osborne was named about the best dressed sports personalities for 1993 by *The Football News*).

4. Revealed at one of Bob Devaney's retirement dinners that he is so straight, his idea of a wild time is eating cottage cheese after the expiration date.

3. Is so decent that he is the only person in the state of Nebraska who refuses to tell Bobbitt jokes.

2. Is such a humanitarian that he decided to let Bobby Bowden win the national championship this year, deferring by one year his own national championship.

(This reason was enthusiastically cheered.)

1. Was so concerned about the heat the administration is getting over the engineering issue that he decided to deflect some public anger from the chancellor by making 600 people sit out in the hallway tonight.

(So many people attended the banquet that many had to eat at tables set up outside the arena. They watched the program from arena seats.) ■



Osborne's 'Secret' Past

While many know of Tom Osborne's success as a coach, few realize the Huskers' head man was a great football player and even played in the pros

Tom Osborne was in his first season as Nebraska's head football coach, the story goes, when during practice one afternoon, he lined up at flanker and ran a post pattern.

He was responding, in part, to those of his players who were skeptical of his ability as a receiver in the National Football League.

Osborne apparently figured a demonstration was in order.

He raced down the field in pursuit of a pass thrown by quarterback Steve Runty. As the ball sailed just beyond his reach, he collided with a defensive back. Ball and coach hit the ground at about the same time.

David Humm, another quarterback who was watching the demonstration, shouted: "Hey Coach, Coach (Bob) Devaney would have caught it."

What gives the story credibility, beside the fact that Humm was capable of such quips, is that Osborne did play in the NFL.

He was a flanker for three seasons, the first on the San Francisco 49ers' taxi squad, the remaining two on the Washington Redskins' active roster.

During his two seasons in Washington, the Redskins' record "was 22-2-2: two wins, two ties and 22 losses," Osborne has joked.

Actually, that's not quite accurate. Washington had a combined record of 2-21-3 during his two seasons with the Redskins, 1960 and 1961.

But you get the idea.

"We were so desperate, things got so tough, we went to what's known as an incentive pay system," Osborne continues. "If you made a touchdown, you got $100. If you caught a pass, you got $50. If you made a great block or a great tackle, you got $15. And, of course, there were fines and deductions if you fumbled, missed an assignment or did something else wrong.

"To give you an idea of the kind of player I was, at the end of the first year, they called me in and added everything up and said I owed the team $34.50. They said I was the highest paid player on the team.

"Actually, I started out with the 49ers. The first recollection I had of being with the Redskins was in New York City. I joined them there. I can remember standing out in front of the Waldorf-Astoria; being the high-class organization they were then, that's where the Redskins always stayed when they were in New York . . . out in front of Waldorf-Astoria."

The reality is slightly less humorous, of course. Osborne was chosen by the 49ers in the 18th round of the 1959 NFL draft, after an outstanding



Osborne's stellar career at Hastings College as a quarterback (top, No. 31) allowed him the opportunity to play flanker in the NFL with the San Francisco 49ers (above, No. 82) and the Washington Redskins.

multi-sport career at Hastings, Neb., College. He earned four letters each in football, basketball and track and was named "State College Athlete of the Year" for 1958 by the *Lincoln Journal* and *Star* newspapers.

San Francisco had become interested in him at the end of his junior season, after Hastings College played in the Mineral Water Bowl in Excelsior Springs, Mo. The brother of one of the game officials was director of player personnel for the 49ers.

Osborne was a quarterback at Hastings College — as well as at Hastings High School, where, as a senior, he was chosen as the state's prep athlete of the year by the *Omaha World-Herald* — but he moved to flanker as a 49ers' rookie.

San Francisco had two veteran quarterbacks in Y.A. Tittle and John Brodie, and 49ers coach Red Hickey told Osborne he intended to have only two quarterbacks. So Osborne could compete with the veterans or he could switch positions. Osborne switched.

"I felt I was always in a position of being disposed of, especially because I was not a great athlete or a high draft choice."

— Tom Osborne

At the time, Osborne was uncertain about his future. He had received a grant to attend a seminary near where the 49ers conducted their preseason training camp and attempted to do both for a brief time.

Finally, however, he decided to focus on professional football. His rookie season, 1959, was spent on the 49ers' inactive list, learning to be a flanker back. A teammate on the 49ers' "meat squad" was Jack Kemp, who was signed by the fledgling American Football League in 1960.

The AFL was formed in midseason, with charter franchises awarded to Boston, Buffalo, Denver, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, New York and Oakland. Its formation was the most significant event of that time.

Kemp, of course, became a star quarterback in the AFL and is now a United States Congressman.

"What I remember most about professional football was not the glamorous stuff. It was the training camps," Osborne writes in "More Than Winning," his autobiography.

"They were interminably long. The physical demand was very great, practicing twice a day for as many as six weeks. But worse was the mental strain, the pressure to do well every day to make sure you made the team. I felt I was always in

OSBORNE'S GREATEST HITS

Picking a 10 greatest hits for Tom Osborne's 21-year coaching career is, of course, presumptuous. There is no hope of complete agreement.

But you've probably purchased a compact disc, or a record album, of someone's greatest hits and something invariably has been left out, some essential work that you're convinced belongs among the 10 tracks.

So consider these to be 10 tracks on a Tom Osborne's "Greatest Hits: Volume I" album, with another volume, or two, or three coming.

Turn on the CD player, or the stereo phonograph (sorry, not available in monaural), and check out this list of 10, in ascending order.

And if you've got a better sequence, or a track you think we've inadvertently omitted, let us know.

10 — Sept. 8, 1973 (Nebraska 40, UCLA 13)

No greatest hits album would be complete without Osborne's first head coaching victory, viewed by an audience of 74,966 in Memorial Stadium and millions more on ABC television.

UCLA ended the Cornhuskers' string of 32 games without a defeat and effectively wiped out Bob Devaney's hopes of coaching Nebraska to an unprecedented third consecutive national championship in the 1972 season-opener in Los Angeles, 20-17.

So there was some measure of revenge. But the real significance was that Osborne began with a victory, against a UCLA team for which Mark Harmon played quarterback.

Nebraska's quarterback, Steve Runty, stole the spotlight from Harmon, however, stepping in for an injured David Humm. Runty and I-back Tony Davis were co-national backs of the week, according to the Associated Press for their performances in the game.

By the middle of the first quarter, the Cornhuskers led 14-0 and were well on their way. Runty scored touchdown No. 1 of the Osborne Era from 1 yard out to cap a 56-yard drive, then Randy Borg returned a punt 77 yards for a second touchdown. Davis rushed for 147 yards and two touchdowns.

9 — Jan. 1, 1974 (Nebraska 19, Texas 3)

Every Osborne-coached team has played in a post-season bowl game. The Cornhuskers' first holiday trip during the Osborne Era was to the Cotton Bowl to play eighth-ranked Texas.

The Cornhuskers, who went into the game ranked No. 12, stopped a Texas running game that featured fullback Roosevelt Leaks and scored 16 points in the second half to win.

Again, Nebraska's offensive stars were Davis and Runty, who was called on to replace Humm at halftime.

The Longhorns managed only 106 yards rushing (equal to Davis's total), with Leaks getting 48 yards net on 13 carries against the likes of John Bell, Steve Manstedt and John Dutton.

Nebraska's performance so impressed Texas Coach Darrell Royal he visited the locker room afterward to congratulate the Cornhuskers.

8 — Oct. 22, 1977 (Nebraska 33, Colorado 15)

Colorado came to Lincoln ranked seventh in the nation by the Associated Press, to Nebraska's No. 18, and left Memorial Stadium a big loser.

The Buffaloes took an early 7-3 lead when Howard Ballage returned a kickoff 98 yards for a touchdown, following Billy Todd's 42-yard field goal. But Nebraska took a 16-15 lead at halftime on a 22-yard pass from Tom Sorley to wingback Kenny Brown with only seven seconds remaining.

The Cornhuskers' Black Shirt defense shut out

a position of being disposed of, especially because I was not a great athlete or a high draft choice. But I hung on all season."

That was no small accomplishment, considering NFL rosters were smaller than they are now.

In 1959, Vince Lombardi arrived in Green Bay and transformed a team that finished 1-10-1 into a winner, at 7-5. In 1960, Lombardi's Packers lost to the Philadelphia Eagles in the NFL championship game. In 1961, they defeated the New York Giants 37-0 to win their first title under Lombardi.

Osborne went to training camp with the 49ers again in 1960 but was released and picked up by the Redskins.

The humorous version of that transition goes like this. "I thought there'd be quite a bit of mention of this big 'trade,' so I got a copy of *The New York Times*," Osborne has said, tongue-in-cheek. "There was only a small item at the very back, in a corner. It said I had been acquired by the Redskins to be a fullback.

"This terrified me. I tore out the article and showed it to the head coach, who I had never seen before.

" 'Coach, this has to be a misprint or a practical joke or something.'

" 'No, Osborne, I want you to be our fullback.'

"'Well, Coach, I'm 6-foot-4 and 185 pounds. Why in the world would you want a guy like that to be your fullback? Most pro fullbacks weigh at least 230 or 240.'

"'Have you ever seen the Redskins play, Osborne? When you see the size of the holes our line opens up, well, you're the only kind of fullback who can get through.'"

Actually, Mike Nixon was Washington's head coach in 1960, and Osborne remained at flanker. He started a couple of games but was primarily a backup to Joe Walton.

The next year, the Redskins had a new head coach, Bill McPeak, and a new starting flanker: Osborne. The job opened when Walton was traded.

Despite enjoying some success that third season — he was second on the team in pass receptions — Osborne was bothered by a hamstring problem that began in training camp. The injury, coupled with other factors, including some disenchantment with the organization, led to his giving up pro football to pursue another career.

"What a fine player I was," Osborne has said, jokingly.

But, the record shows, he was.

And if you're still not convinced by all of this, you can look it up —as someone famous (Casey Stengel, maybe) once said.

In "The Official Encyclopedia of Football," seventh revised edition, is the listing: Thomas Osborne, End — 1960-61, Washington Redskins. ■

Colorado in the second half. Linebackers Lee Kunz and Jeff Carpenter were all over the field, making 12 and 10 tackles, respectively. The performance was especially gratifying for Kunz, who came to Nebraska from Golden, Colo.

Nebraska rushed for 390 yards, including 172 by I.M. Hipp, behind a charge by Stan Waldemore and the other Cornhusker offensive linemen.

7 — Oct. 8, 1983 (Nebraska 14, Oklahoma State 10)

This was coaching victory No. 102 for Osborne, enabling him to pass Devaney as the winningest coach in Cornhusker football history. It also was one of the few times during the 1983 season when Nebraska's "Scoring Explosion" offense didn't explode.

The game was played in Stillwater, Okla. Nebraska was unbeaten and ranked No. 1.

Oklahoma State was unbeaten and ranked No. 20. It was the first game matching unbeaten Big Eight teams in eight years.

The Cornhuskers lost four of five fumbles and had one pass intercepted, against an aggressive Oklahoma State defense led by tackle Leslie O'Neal. But Nebraska's defense intercepted three Ike Jackson passes, the third by safety Bret Clark in the end zone on the final play of the game.

Oh yes, the Cowboys' head coach was that guy with the chemically enhanced hair, Jimmy Johnson.

6 — Aug. 29, 1983 (Nebraska 44, Penn State 6)

Penn State was the defending national champion, having taken the title, some felt, from the Cornhuskers in a game at State College, Pa.



Osborne, with grandson, William, accepts a plaque commemorating his 200th career win.

Nebraska was a consensus preseason No. 1 for 1983. The matchup was perfect for the first Kickoff Classic at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J. Well, it would have been perfect if the Cornhuskers had cooperated with the promoters.

Nebraska wasted no time in demoralizing the preseason No. 4 Nittany Lions, scoring on its first three possessions.

The Cornhuskers fumbled nine times, but lost only one.

Penn State narrowly averted its first shutout loss since 1972 when it scored with 20 seconds remaining. Even so, the loss equaled the worst in Coach Joe Paterno's coaching career.

The Nittany Lions went home to Happy Valley not so happy.

Nebraska went on a 12-game winning streak that didn't end until the Orange Bowl . . .

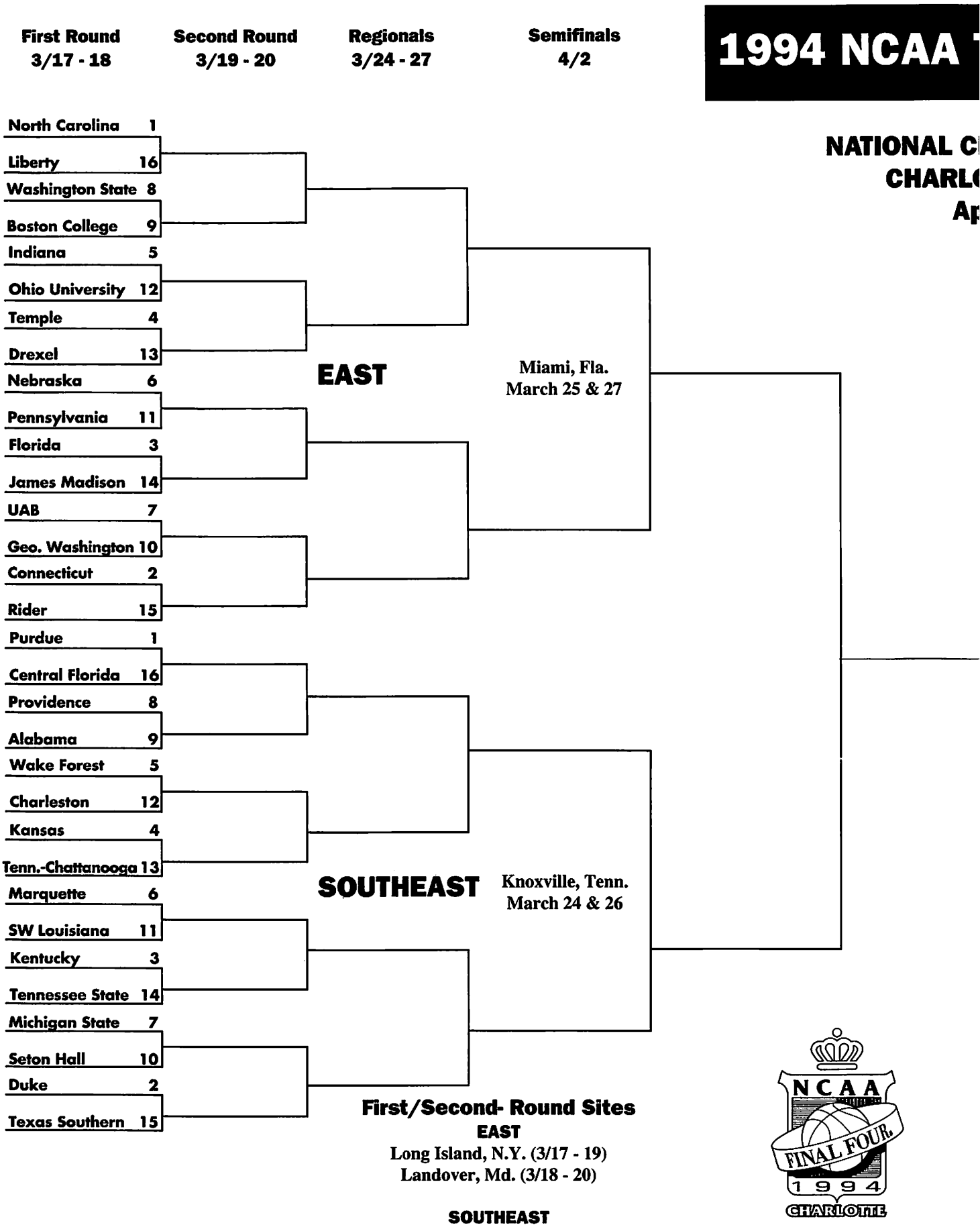
But more about that later.

5 — Oct. 7, 1994 (Nebraska 27, Oklahoma State 13)

The significance of this game, played in Stillwater, Okla., was much greater than the game itself, prompting Osborne to remark afterward: "I take it with some mixed emotion."

The victory was No. 200 for Osborne, who is one of only four active coaches in Division I-A of the NCAA with that many. The others are Penn State's Paterno, with 257; Florida State's Bobby Bowden, with 239; and Iowa's Hayden Fry, with 200.

Continued on page 18


First Round
3/17 - 18
Second Round
3/19 - 20
Regionals
3/24 - 27
Semifinals
4/2
1994 NCAA
NATIONAL C
CHARL
Ap
North Carolina 1
Liberty 16
Washington State 8
Boston College 9
Indiana 5
Ohio University 12
Temple 4
Drexel 13
Nebraska 6
Pennsylvania 11
Florida 3
James Madison 14
UAB 7
Geo. Washington 10
Connecticut 2
Rider 15
EAST
Miami, Fla.
March 25 & 27
Purdue 1
Central Florida 16
Providence 8
Alabama 9
Wake Forest 5
Charleston 12
Kansas 4
Tenn.-Chattanooga 13
Marquette 6
SW Louisiana 11
Kentucky 3
Tennessee State 14
Michigan State 7
Seton Hall 10
Duke 2
Texas Southern 15
SOUTHEAST
Knoxville, Tenn.
March 24 & 26
First/Second- Round Sites
EAST
Long Island, N.Y. (3/17 - 19)
Landover, Md. (3/18 - 20)
SOUTHEAST
Lexington, Ky. (3/17 - 19)
St. Petersburg, Fla. (3/18 - 20)
NCAA
FINAL FOUR
1994
CHARLOTTE

TOURNAMENT

HAMPIONSHIP
OTTE, N.C.
ril 4

Semifinals	Regionals	Second Round	First Round
4/2	3/24 - 27	3/19 - 20	3/17 - 18



NCAA

First/Second- Round Sites

MIDWEST

Wichita, Kan. (3/17 - 19)
Oklahoma City, Okla. (3/18 - 20)

WEST

Ogden, Utah (3/17 - 19)
Sacramento, Cal. (3/18 - 20)

Only eight other major college coaches have that many all-time. Bear Bryant is first with 323.

Osborne's ambivalence was a result of the fact that the Cornhuskers trailed at halftime 13-6 and were tied going into the fourth quarter against lowly Oklahoma State.

Barron Miles gave Nebraska the boost it needed when he blocked a punt and then recovered the ball in the end zone less than a minute into the fourth quarter. Cornhusker linebacker Ed Stewart showed little respect for the hosts, making 12 tackles.

It was a victory, a very significant victory in a remarkable, and continuing, coaching career.

4 — Jan. 1, 1994 (Nebraska 16, Florida State 18)

All of the games have been victories so far. But sometimes a coach shows his character in defeat, which was the case on New Year's night at the Orange Bowl stadium in Miami.

The details should still be vivid in the minds of Cornhusker fans. Florida State was regarded as invincible, yet Nebraska played the Seminoles off their feet, winning in every category except score.

The game will go down among the greatest in Nebraska's rich history, regardless of the score.

3 — Jan. 2, 1984 (Nebraska 30, Miami 31)

What's this, another loss? Osborne has never stood taller than he did in Miami's Orange Bowl that night.

During a press conference the day before the game, he was asked if he would play for a tie if it would mean winning a national title.

"I supposed if it was fourth-and-20 with no time left and it was a question of doing nothing more than throwing a 'Hail Mary' pass, I might try to kick a field goal," he said.

"But if it came down to a two-point, or if it were inside their 10-yard line, I'd have to go for it. That's a one-in-a-100 question. I hope the situation doesn't arise because if it does, I'm going to be crucified, one way or the other."

The next night, of course, the situation did arise, and Osborne did just as he said he would. He elected to attempt a two-point conversion instead of settling for an almost-certain tie that would have kept his team unbeaten and probably would have earned it a mythical national championship.

Osborne did not, however, get crucified for his decision, which produced an incomplete pass from Turner Gill, intended for Jeff Smith.

Nationally, as well as in Nebraska, Osborne was praised for playing to win. "I was so tunneled into winning the game that it never occurred to me to kick the point," he said. "I would've had no respect from the players if we had done anything but what we did. They were so confident in their ability to move the ball so well that to their dying day, they would've felt we could have made the two points.

"A lot of players couldn't have lived with it the rest of their lives. I couldn't myself."

Are those not the words of a great coach, and leader?

Two Orange Bowl games, a decade apart, say as much about Osborne as any of those 206 victories.

2 — Sept. 17, 1977 (Nebraska 31, Alabama 24)

A week earlier, in the season opener, the Cornhuskers were upset by Washington State 19-10. As a result, they were unranked when No. 4 Alabama came to Memorial Stadium for a game shown to most of the nation by ABC.

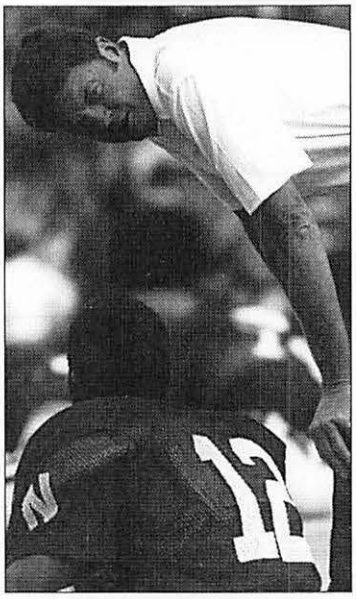


The Crimson Tide was coached by the legendary Bear Bryant. An audience of 75,899 was on hand.

The lead went back and forth, with the Cornhuskers taking a 10-7 lead on a little "Tomfoolery," a scoring pass from Randy Garcia to Rick Berns on a fake field goal attempt.

Alabama tied the game at 24 with 12:24 remaining, following an 80-yard drive. But Nebraska responded with its winning touchdown five minutes later. Berns took the ball into the end zone from a yard out to cap an effort that earned him recognition as the national back of the week.

He rushed for 128 yards and two touchdowns, plus the touchdown catch of the Garcia pass.



Whenever Osborne and Oklahoma's Barry Switzer (above, left) squared off, football fans got their monies worth — especially in 1978.

Former quarterback Turner Gill (left, No. 12) helped Osborne rack up the wins quickly.

1 — Nov. 11, 1978 (Nebraska 17, Oklahoma 14)

The Sooners came to Lincoln on a bitterly cold afternoon unbeaten and top-ranked. But for this game, the 1978 team very well could have been Coach Barry Switzer's best.

Nebraska had recovered from an opening-game loss to Alabama in Birmingham, Ala., and was ranked No. 4. The Big Eight championship was on the line. Osborne's record against the Sooners stood at 0-5.

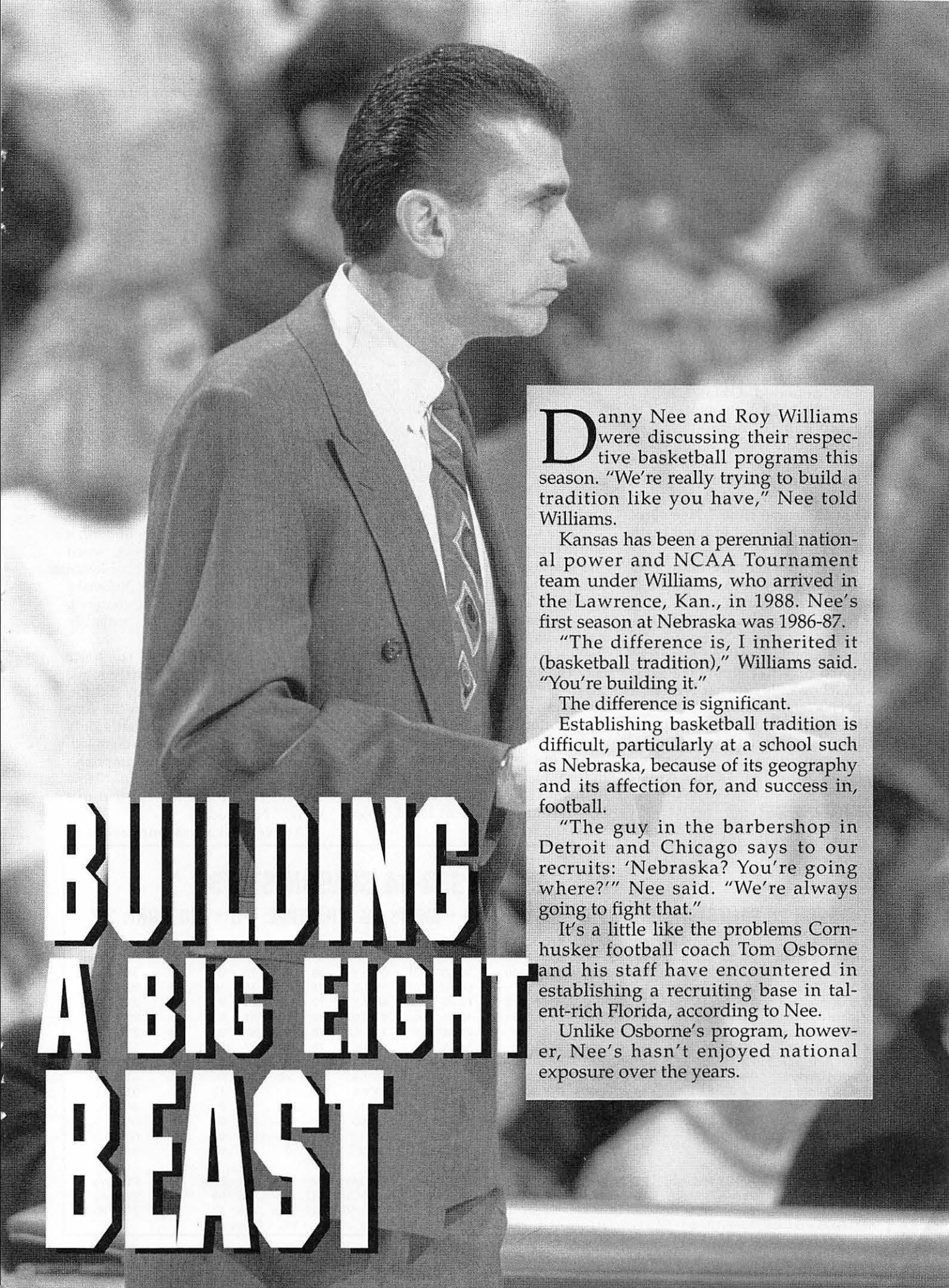
Despite the cold, 76,015 were jammed into Memorial Stadium and most of the nation watched on television.

Oklahoma's vaunted Wishbone offense managed 339 yards rushing. But in typical fashion, the Sooners attempted only two passes, both of which fell incomplete.

The most vivid image of the game for many Cornhusker fans remains not Jim Pillen's fumble recovery but rather a tackle made by John Ruud on a punt. Ruud hit Oklahoma's Kelly Phelps with such force that he separated both the ball from Phelps and Phelps' shoulder.

The official, however, ruled there had been no fumble.

As we said when we began spinning these 10 tracks, there might be some disagreement not only about the sequence but also the selections. ■



BUILDING A BIG EIGHT BEAST

Danny Nee and Roy Williams were discussing their respective basketball programs this season. "We're really trying to build a tradition like you have," Nee told Williams.

Kansas has been a perennial national power and NCAA Tournament team under Williams, who arrived in the Lawrence, Kan., in 1988. Nee's first season at Nebraska was 1986-87.

"The difference is, I inherited it (basketball tradition)," Williams said. "You're building it."

The difference is significant.

Establishing basketball tradition is difficult, particularly at a school such as Nebraska, because of its geography and its affection for, and success in, football.

"The guy in the barbershop in Detroit and Chicago says to our recruits: 'Nebraska? You're going where?'" Nee said. "We're always going to fight that."

It's a little like the problems Cornhusker football coach Tom Osborne and his staff have encountered in establishing a recruiting base in talent-rich Florida, according to Nee.

Unlike Osborne's program, however, Nee's hasn't enjoyed national exposure over the years.

The Big Eight's recent decision to take in four schools from the Southwest Conference beginning in 1996 will help by increasing conference exposure and its sphere of influence. "Upgrading the conference will create more opportunity," Nee said.

The success of the Nebraska basketball program is inextricably tied to the conference, said Nee, who dates the dramatic Big Eight rise in national prominence in basketball from 1987-88. That's when Kansas defeated Oklahoma in the NCAA championship game. Conference basketball was at its zenith.

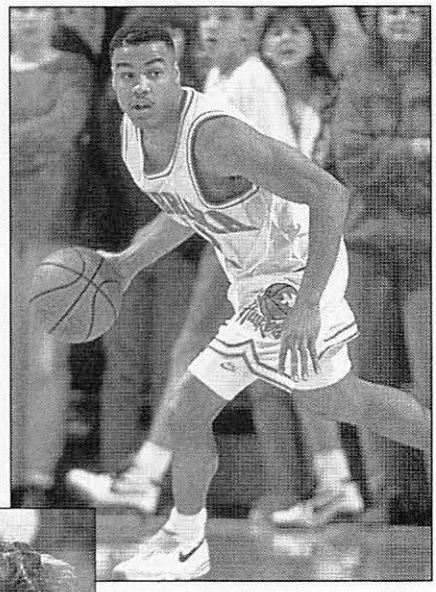
"Nebraska has had its upward spiral (in basketball) at the same time," Nee said. "It's been going hand in hand (with the Big Eight)."

The Cornhuskers are known by the company they keep. That's a fact of conference affiliation.

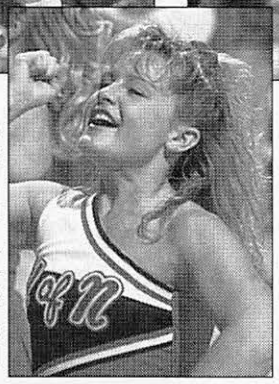
"We're put in the same sentence with those teams," Nee said. "If you're talking Indiana and Kentucky standard or what Nebraska was, what Nebraska is or what Nebraska can be, it's totally different."

But the standards by which the program is measured have been elevated considerably since Nee replaced Moe Iba as the Cornhuskers' coach.





The play of seniors Bruce Chubick (left) and Jamar Johnson (below) gave Danny Nee and Nebraska plenty to cheer about this season.



Nee's first Nebraska team finished 21-12 and reached the semifinals of the National Invitation Tournament, rare success for Cornhusker basketball. But there's no comparison between that team and this year's team, according to Nee. "And I don't mean it derogatorily," he said.

The 1986-87 team wasn't as good as any of his last three teams, which, in turn, weren't as good as the 1990-91 team. Those teams were "solid, OK, but at a different level," Nee said.

Nee's 1990-91 team finished third in the Big Eight, with a 26-8 record, the best, based on victories, in school history. That team took Nebraska to a different level, changing the expectations, probably forever.

The Cornhuskers have dropped off a little since then — though they did finish in a second-place tie in the conference last season. But that's only because the standards have changed. What once was considered improvement is now the status quo. "How we get to the next level, I don't know," Nee said.

As Nebraska has improved, so

STATISTICS

NEBRASKA 1993-94 SEASON STATS

(THROUGH 26 GAMES) RECORD: 17-9 · HOME: 13-3 · AWAY: 4-6 · NEUTRAL: 0-0 · BIG EIGHT: 7-7

PLAYER	G/GS	Min./Avg.	FG-FGA/Pct.	3FG-FGA/Pct.	FT-FTA/Pct.	Reb./Avg.	PF	Ast.	TO	Blks.	Stls.	Pts./Avg.
52 Eric Piatkowski	26/ 26	833/ 32.0	190-380/ .500	56-147/ .381	111-137/ .810	164/ 6.3	55	75	63	17	43	547/ 21.0
24 Jaron Boone	26/ 24	776/ 29.8	121-248/ .488	30-79/ .380	39-55/ .709	65/ 2.5	58	96	73	6	32	311/ 12.0
44 Bruce Chubick	26/ 26	652/ 25.1	98-176/ .557	2-6/ .333	94-133/ .707	175/ 6.7	71	23	45	15	16	292/ 11.2
21 Erick Strickland	26/ 13	576/ 22.2	84-206/ .408	32-96/ .333	76-93/ .817	80/ 3.1	73	87	63	8	57	276/ 10.6
12 Jamar Johnson	24/ 15	635/ 26.5	94-190/ .495	26-66/ .394	43-54/ .796	69/ 2.9	41	106	41	5	34	257/ 10.7
43 Terrance Badgett	25/ 12	530/ 21.2	101-196/ .515	3-19/ .158	27-44/ .614	117/ 4.7	76	42	52	24	15	232/ 9.3
34 Melvin Brooks	26/ 3	457/ 17.6	49-100/ .490	9-24/ .375	19-25/ .760	106/ 4.1	78	44	37	8	18	126/ 4.8
33 Tom Best	22/ 11	391/ 17.8	38-102/ .373	2-17/ .118	15-24/ .625	106/ 4.8	56	23	26	5	12	93/ 4.2
30 Jason Glock	19/ 0	268/ 14.1	35-68/ .515	8-25/ .320	7-8/ .875	36/ 1.9	25	24	10	1	12	85/ 4.5
32 Mikki Moore	14/ 0	87/ 6.2	10-22/ .453	0-2/ .000	11-18/ .611	13/ 0.9	13	1	5	10	3	31/ 2.2
00 Lee Steinbrook	4/ 0	7/ 1.8	3-3/ 1.00	1-1/ 1.00	1-2/ .500	3/ 0.8	0	0	1	0	0	8/ 2.0
03 Chad Jaeger	1/ 0	3/ 3.0	1-1/ 1.00	0-0/ .000	0-0/ .000	1/ 1.00	0	0	0	0	0	2/ 2.0
20 Chris Newton	4/ 0	6/ 1.5	0-3/ .000	0-1/ .000	0-0/ .000	2/ 0.5	0	0	2	0	1	0/ 0.0
45 Kip Realph	3/ 0	5/ 1.7	0-2/ .000	0-1/ .000	0-0/ .000	2/ 0.7	1	0	0	0	0	0/ 0.0

TEAM	G/GS	Min./Avg.	FG-FGA/Pct.	3FG-FGA/Pct.	FT-FTA/Pct.	Reb./Avg.	PF	Ast.	TO	Blks.	Stls.	Pts./Avg.
NEBRASKA	26	5225	824-1697/ .486	169-484/ .349	443-593/ .747	1006/ 38.7	547	521	418	99	243	2260/ 86.9
OPPONENT	26	5225	727-1661/ .438	164-507/ .323	464-699/ .664	1013/ 39.0	521	409	446	59	208	2082/ 80.1

KEY: G/GS = Games/ Games Started • PF = Personal Fouls • Ast. = Assists • TO = Turnovers • Blks. = Blocks • Stls. = Steals

has the level of competition within the Big Eight, from top to bottom. The conference is achieving parity in basketball, as it is in football.

"The margin of winning and losing is getting smaller," said Nee.

Recruiting, of course, is a key. At the beginning of his tenure as head coach, Nee was concerned about attracting Big Eight-caliber players, regardless of their positions. Now, the needs are more specific.

This season was a good example of the new dynamics of recruiting. Nee had quality athletes equal to any he's had. But he lacked a big man. When there's parity, and "you have to move players around (to fill positions), it really weakens your team and your program," Nee said.

Bruce Chubick, one of this season's four seniors, was forced to play out of position to compensate for the lack of a true center. At 6-foot-7, he was constantly matched against much taller players. A less talented, or less hard-working athlete couldn't have done what Chubick did.

"Bruce did everything we asked of him. I really appreciated the work he did," Nee said.

Chubick and the other seniors provided the leadership that enabled Nebraska to succeed despite lacking a center and limited numbers.

Tom Best, who transferred to Nebraska from Toledo for his junior season, fought through a bad back that would have sidelined most people and some personal problems to contribute.

Jamar Johnson, who sat out his freshman year at Nebraska because of NCAA eligibility requirements, was a steadying influence at point guard.

And Eric Piatkowski had an "all-star" season, according to Nee.

"The guy who had the biggest impact is Piatkowski," Nee said. "He was at an extremely high level of efficiency the whole year."

That despite being the focus of opposing defenses. Piatkowski was grabbed, held and jostled from the opening tip to the final gun.

"He's one of the best I've coached," said Nee. "Eric Piatkowski has a bright future. You (media) guys chuckled and smirked when I said Rich King would be a first-round (NBA) draft pick. Now I say he'll be one."

Piatkowski was highly regarded as a high school player in Rapid City, S.D. He was a prize recruit.

Now, "I need a Piatkowski in every (recruiting) class," said Nee. "But just because you need it, doesn't mean you're going to get it."

Piatkowski and Chubick arrived at the same time, and both redshirted. They've been in the program for five years. As a result, "Piatkowski and Chubick are household names," said Nee. "They're recognizable."

Nebraska basketball tickets, particularly for conference games, are at a premium. Every Big Eight home game was soldout this season.

Nee is working to upgrade his non-conference schedule, "slowly." An expanded conference will facilitate that. The Big Eight's television contract with the ESPN cable network has showcased the conference and, in so doing, increased Nebraska's exposure. The Cornhuskers don't have to sit and wait for television to call. They can act. They have something to sell.

Beyond the wins and losses, "we're graduating players," Nee said. "Our style of play is attractive. We have a lot of support, a lot of enthusiasm. We're solid as a rock."

The day after the Cornhuskers' loss to Oklahoma at Norman — 115-111 in overtime — Nee received numerous positive calls on his weekly radio show. The message was: Coach, we're still behind you because we appreciate the effort your team gave.

"That's the nicest thing about Nebraska. They respect the effort. Our fans appreciated the team," Nee said.

It's not quite like that at Kentucky or UCLA. The fans appreciate effort, certainly, and they support their teams — to a point.

After Nebraska upset Kansas at the Devaney Sports Center in late February, Williams remarked about the enthusiasm and support of Cornhusker fans. Some Kansas fans have become complacent, Williams said.

Expectations come with the tradition of such programs. Nee would like to get NU there someday. ■

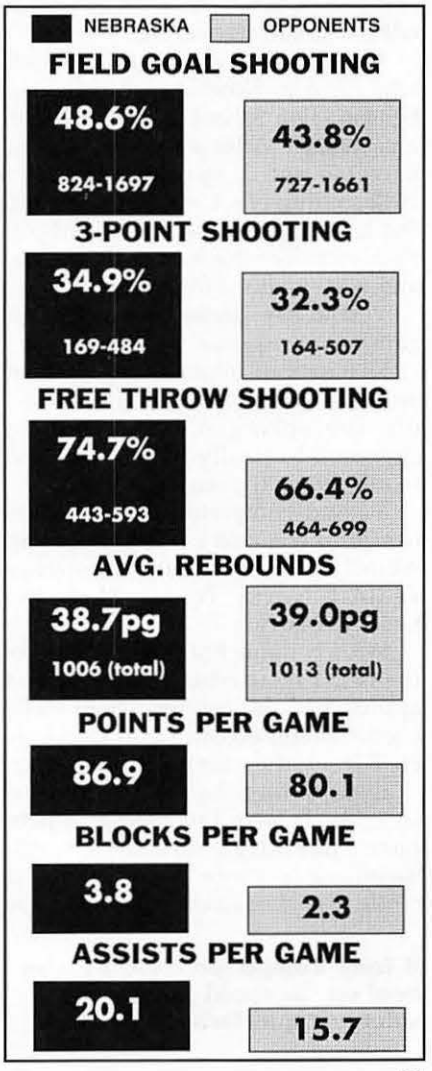
NEE'S RECORD AT NEBRASKA

Year	W-L	Big Eight Finish
86-87	21-12	5th
87-88	13-18	T6th
88-89	17-16	7th
89-90	10-18	7th
90-91	26-8	3rd
91-92	19-10	5th
92-93	20-11	T2nd
93-94	20-9	4th

1993 RESULTS

RECORD 20-9

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
N 27	W	96-85	Texas-San Antonio
N 28	L	75-78	Texas
D 1	L	82-91	@ Appalachian St.
Ameritas Classic - Lincoln, Neb.			
D 3	**W**	**94-68**	**Ohio**
D 4	**W**	**111-85**	**Portland**
D 9	W	67-53	@ Creighton
D 11	W	94-72	Wichita St.
D 18	W	85-81	@ Michigan St.
D 20	W	86-61	Florida A&M
D 31	W	70-63	Northern Iowa
J 3	W	78-72	@ Iowa St.
J 5	W	89-85	Southern Utah
J 8	W	106-67	Colorado
J 15	W	92-71	Missouri-Kan. City
J 19	L	81-86	@ Colorado
J 24	L	73-89	Missouri
J 29	L	76-79	Oklahoma
F 6	L	87-94	@ Kansas
F 9	W	76-68	@ Kansas St.
F 12	W	102-96	Iowa St.
F 14	L	111-115	@ Oklahoma
F 19	L	80-98	@ Oklahoma St.
F 23	W	96-87	Kansas
F 26	W	86-77	Kansas St.
M 2	W	89-81	Oklahoma St.
M 5	L	78-80	@ Missouri
Big Eight Tournament - Kansas City, Mo.			
M 11	**W**	**105-88**	**Oklahoma**
M 12	**W**	**98-91**	**Missouri**
M 13	**W**	**77-68**	**Oklahoma St.**



FOOTBALL QUICKS

HARD-LUCK VELAND'S SWITCH TO SAFETY MAY HAVE BEEN PREMATURE

Tony Veland gets the nomination on this year's Nebraska football team as the hard-luck Husker. Veland, who will be a junior, won't be able to do contact work in spring practice, coach Tom Osborne said recently.

Veland was sidelined by a ruptured right patellar tendon in the first half of the Texas Tech game last fall and is still recovering.

That's how it's been for Veland, who came to Nebraska from Omaha Benson High School as a scholarship quarterback. After a redshirt season, he came out of spring practice in 1992 sharing No. 1 with Mike Grant. But he suffered a broken collarbone 10 days before the start of the season and was sidelined for five games.

Veland saw limited action in four games that season.

Less serious injuries, among them an ankle sprain, hampered him during the spring of 1993, but he appeared to finally be in a position to play when the season began.

Veland completed 6-of-9 passes for 76 yards and a touchdown to Abdul Muhammad in the opener against North Texas. Then the kneecap injury.

With Tommie Frazier solidified as the No. 1 quarterback now, Veland approached the coaches about moving to safety, according to Osborne. He'll begin the transition this spring.

Even though he can't have contact, "he'll have the spring to prepare mentally," Osborne said. Switching positions "is something he could do" because of his athletic ability, according to Osborne.

Veland's request to switch positions came before the unexpected departure of scholarship quarterback Ben Rutz, who transferred to a junior college in Oklahoma, leaving Nebraska thin at quarterback.

"We're very concerned about depth at quarterback," Osborne said. "With Rutz, we were still pretty strong. Brook (Berringer) has the history of elbow problems.

"If either he or Tommie went down for a substantial period of time, it would be a bit frightening."

The only other quarterback who has been in the program is Matt Turman, a walkon from Wahoo, Neb. John Elder, a scholarship recruit from Sioux City, Iowa, is expected to redshirt.

Veland "knows he might have to move back to quarterback if things were to get bad," Osborne said.

Veland's change of position is one of only two such spring experiments Osborne anticipates. Eric Alford, a wingback last season, probably will get a look at tight end.

With the departure of the top two players at that position, Gerald Armstrong and Trumane Bell, it's a definite concern, Osborne said.

Based on the experience returning, "the rest of the offense should be reasonably solid," he said.

The biggest concern defensively is safety, according to Osborne. John Reece and Toby Wright have completed their eligibility, opening up competition there.

Veland is one of a handful of players expected to be held out of contact in the spring, Osborne said. Nose tackle Terry Connealy underwent shoulder surgery and could be limited during the spring, as could



Bob Berry

If Tony Veland (on crutches) can heal up, he could see time at safety or quarterback this fall.

offensive lineman Joel Gesky, who also underwent off-season shoulder surgery.

HUSKERS TO PLAY WEST VIRGINIA

Nebraska and West Virginia, who both went undefeated in the regular season last year, will meet in the Kickoff Classic at Giants Stadium on Sunday, August 28, 1994.

"Nebraska and West Virginia represent the best in college athletics and their appearance in Kickoff Classic XII will add to the game's celebrated history," said Michael D. Francis, Kickoff chairman.

The Classic, which currently has a 2 p.m. (EST) kickoff, was won by Florida State last year.

West Virginia finished with an 11-1 record and a No. 7 ranking in the final Associated Press poll. The Mountaineers captured the Big East Championship and Coach Don Nehlen was the unanimous choice as Big East Coach of the Year.

"We felt it was a real natural matchup," said Tom Osborne. "Our players were very enthusiastic about playing this game, about 90 percent, and that was crucial in our decision.

"We have been wanting to play on the east coach for recruiting purposes and for the players on our team who are from that area. We played UCLA and Washington on the west coast the last two years, but haven't been east since the 1988 Kickoff Classic."

BROWN TURNS DOWN SEMINOLE JOB OFFER

Cornhusker receivers coach Ron Brown rejected a job offer from Florida State in late February. In announcing his decision, Brown said: "This was not a Florida State versus Nebraska or Tom Osborne versus Bobby Bowden thing. It is a great opportunity, but I think staying is a great opportunity, too."

Brown did not apply for the position. Florida State contacted him.

DIVISION I-A PLAYOFF STILL HOT TOPIC

Osborne was among the coaches who participated in the NCAA's annual College Football Forum in Kansas City, Mo., in February. Among the topics of discussion was a football playoff involving I-A schools.

Osborne told the *Lincoln Journal-Star* such a playoff is likely. Whether or not it would be positive depends on how the money it would generate were to be used. "If we're raising more money, but we won't be spending it on the young men who make it, then it's not good. But if it pays for funding gender equity and solves financial problems and provides more opportunity, then it might be good," he said.

"About 90 percent of everything we talk about and everything the NCAA does is about economics."

The Big Eight's decision to add four Southwest Conference schools in 1996 is further evidence that a playoff system is inevitable.

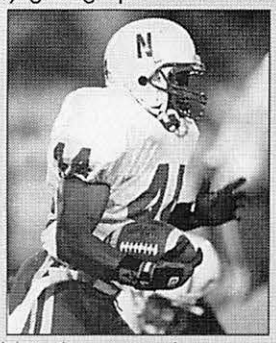
Louisville head coach Howard Schnellenberger said such a playoff would rank with the best sporting events: NFL playoffs, baseball World Series and NCAA Final Four.

WRESTLING RECRUIT

Cornhusker scholarship recruit Ted Butler, from Lincoln Southeast, won the heavyweight division at the Nebraska State High School Wrestling Championships in February. Butler was the defending state champion. ■

JUST HOW CLOSE WAS HE?

Calvin Jones recently broke his media silence and talked about his decision to submit his name for the NFL draft, thereby giving up his final season of collegiate eligibility.



"I needed something more, and I think I can find that in pro football," he said. "I value the chance to take the next step more than I value records or trophies."

Jones almost certainly would have been among the top candidates to succeed Florida State's Charlie Ward as the Heisman Trophy winner in 1994. But while Heisman Trophy races are sometimes popularity contests, Jones had a shot at improving on some school records based on his ability next year.

Although it was highly impossible Jones would've beaten Mike Rozier's career rushing record (4,837), we thought it would be interesting to see how close Jones could've gotten. What we did was average Jones' numbers for three years and added that total to his already established records. The average does not take into account his limited action as a freshman (1991) or that he missed two games last season. Take a look at where Jones could have ended his career.

NEBRASKA CAREER RUSHING LEADERS

CURRENT STANDINGS

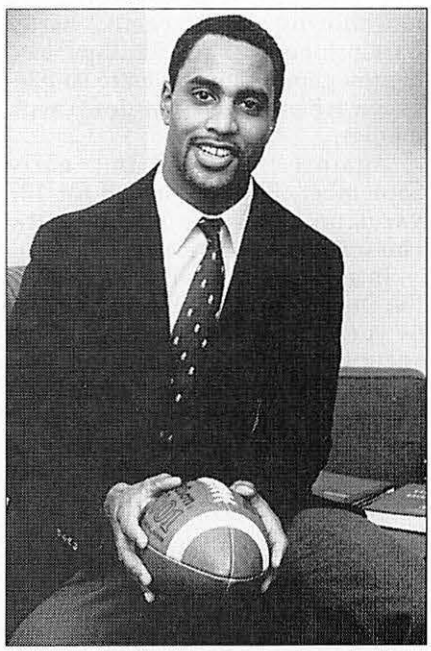
Player, Years	Attempts	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg.	TD
1. Mike Rozier (IB) 1981-83	668	4,837	57	4,780	7.16	49
2. Calvin Jones (IB) 1991-93	461	3,215	62	3.153	6.84	40

PROJECTED 1994 STATISTICS

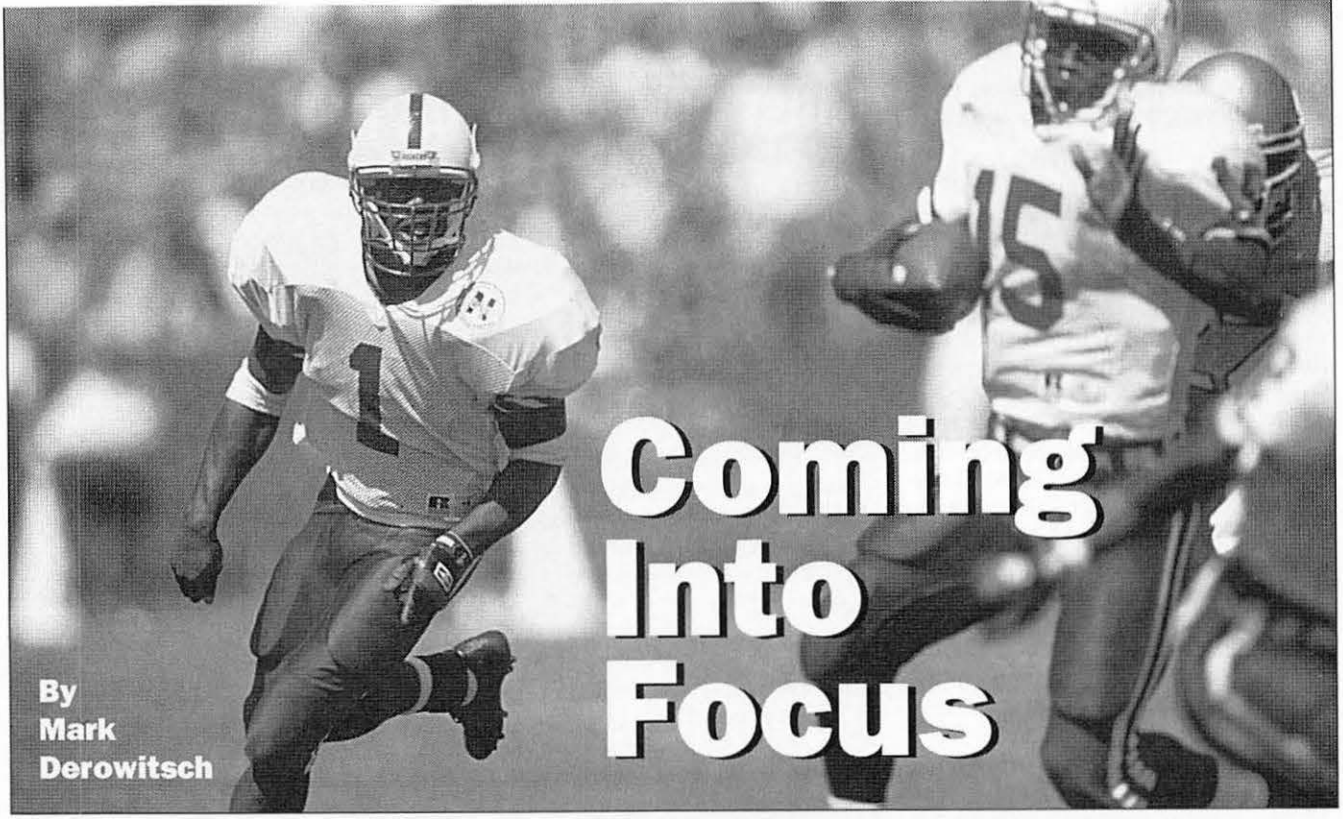
1. Calvin Jones (IB) 1994	154	1,072	17	1,055	6.92	13

PROJECTED STANDINGS

1. Mike Rozier (IB) 1981-83	668	4,837	57	4,780	7.16	49



Receivers coach Ron Brown told Florida State "no" when they came calling.



Coming Into Focus

By Mark Derowitsch

Norm Schindler

Lawrence Phillips (above, No. 1) cut his teeth last season and will start the spring as the No. 1 I-back. Look for Leslie Dennis (below) to play a key role in the secondary this fall.

With only one season gone, rating Nebraska's 1993 recruiting class, at this point, would be unfair.

After all, of the 18 players who signed national letters of intent to play football at Nebraska in February of 1993, only one player saw a significant amount of action.

However, judging by how well that player — I-back Lawrence Phillips — performed, the class has already begun to reap dividends.

Phillips, from West Covina, Calif., rushed for 508 yards and scored five touchdowns playing behind starter Calvin Jones last fall. Phillips' two biggest games came on national television when Jones went down with injuries.

Against UCLA in early September, Phillips rushed for 137 yards on 28 attempts to lead the Huskers to a 14-13 victory.

In an 18-16 loss to Florida State in the Orange Bowl, Phillips rushed for 64 yards on 13 carries — all in the second half — in the game that decided the national championship.

Nebraska recruiting coordinator Dave Gillespie knew Phillips was capable of contributing right away, but he didn't expect him to have such a big year.

"Without injuries to some backs ahead of him, Lawrence may not have been in a position to contribute like he did," Gillespie said. "Whenever we bring in a freshman, we figure he should be able to help out right away. So many times circumstances dictate how much a player will play or not play.

"But Lawrence certainly took advantage of the situation."

For his effort toward the end of the season, Phillips will enter spring practice as the Huskers' top I-back — ahead of sophomore Damon Benning and juniors Clinton Childs and Jeff Makovicka.

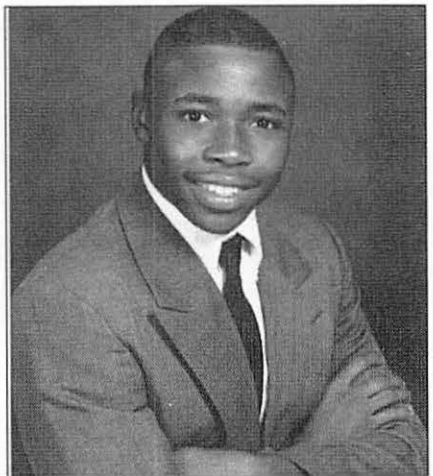
It's a spot Phillips will have to fight to keep.

"The competition is going to be very tough, but Lawrence has earned the top spot going in," said runnings back coach Frank Solich.

When asked to compare Phillips to other Husker I-backs, Solich declined. However, Phillips was the first true freshman to play a major part at I-back in a number of years.

"I don't like to compare backs because they're all a little different," Solich said. "Lawrence is a very talented player. He took advantage of his situation, and he was noticed."

While Phillips was the only member of the recruiting class who received attention last year, Gillespie feels a number of other players can make a significant contribution this fall.



The area the Huskers need the most help in is the secondary.

Rover Toby Wright and cornerback John Reece, who both started a year ago, are gone after using up their eligibility.

That's where Leslie Dennis — a 5-foot-10 cornerback from Bradenton, Fla. — comes in.

Dennis is one of the fastest Huskers, and could play a key role in the fall. Free safety Matt Aden of Omaha, Neb., is the other freshman who could see action.

The Huskers also have three offensive linemen who could step up and earn playing time this spring.

Eric Anderson of Lincoln, Fred Pollack of Omaha and Aaron Taylor of Wichita Falls, Texas, sat out last year earning redshirts.

However, Gillespie said the decision to sit Anderson was a difficult one to make.

"The offensive line is the toughest position to play, especially for a young guy," Gillespie said. "We almost didn't redshirt Eric because we felt he had the chance to help us right away. Aaron Taylor and Fred

1994 WALK-ON LIST

The Nebraska football team's 1994 recruiting class will include at least 17 walk-ons, 13 from in-state.

Darren Brummond	OLB	6-2	200	Englewood, Colo.
Monte Christo	QB	5-11	172	Kearney, Neb.
Josh Cobb	FB	5-11	218	Wallace, Neb.
Greg Ford	FB	5-10	237	Whittier, Calif.
Ben Gessford	OL	6-2	214	Lincoln, Neb.
Billy Haafke	WR	5-11	176	Sioux City, Neb.
Jai Jackson	DB	5-10	161	Lincoln, Neb.
Billy Lafleur	P/PK	6-0	187	Norfolk, Neb.
Casey Macken	LB	6-0	204	Cozad, Neb.
Joel Mackovicka	FB	5-10	196	Brainard, Neb.
Andy Miller	WR	5-10	162	Papillion, Neb.
Brian Morro	P/PK	5-11	180	Middletown, N.J.
Anthony Schmode	OL	6-2	225	Battle Creek, Neb.
Jeremy Shadrick	L	6-5	275	Tulsa, Okla.
Ross Tessendorf	G	6-3	235	Columbus, Neb.
Andy Thompson	DB	5-10	160	Omaha, Neb.
Josh Vollertsen	OL	6-4	276	Palmyra, Neb.

Pollack will have an opportunity this spring as well."

Anderson, a 6-4, 280 pounder, was an all-state player at Lincoln Southeast High. Pollack (6-4, 290) was an all-state selection from Omaha Creighton Prep and Taylor stands 6-2 and weighs 290.

At times this spring, Phillips could be joined in the backfield by another member of the Class of '93.

Fullback Vershan Jackson of Omaha South High sat out last year as a redshirt, and Solich feels the youngster may be able to challenge for a job this year.

Jackson rushed for 1,278 yards as a senior at South High, including 295 in a game against Council Bluffs (Iowa) Thomas Jefferson.

"He's one of a number of guys who are fighting for time," Solich said.

Ramone Worthy, of Camden, N.J. and a distant cousin of Husker Heisman Trophy winner Mike Rozier, will also be in the I-back battle in the spring.

The Class of '93 may also boost the Huskers' receiving corps this fall.

Eric Alford, a junior college transfer from Garden City Community College, caught three passes for 27 yards last year as a wingback. He played in every game, as reserve behind Abdul Muhammad and Clester Johnson, except against Colorado.

Columbus native Tim Carpenter, a fullback, will try to make the switch to tight end in the spring in order to gain more playing time.

"Tim's a team player," Solich said. "We'll see how it all works out. He'll either challenge at fullback or he could end up playing tight end. He's talented enough to do both."

Josh Heskew at tight end and Lance Brown at split end haven't been able to show what they can do due to injuries both sustained last summer.

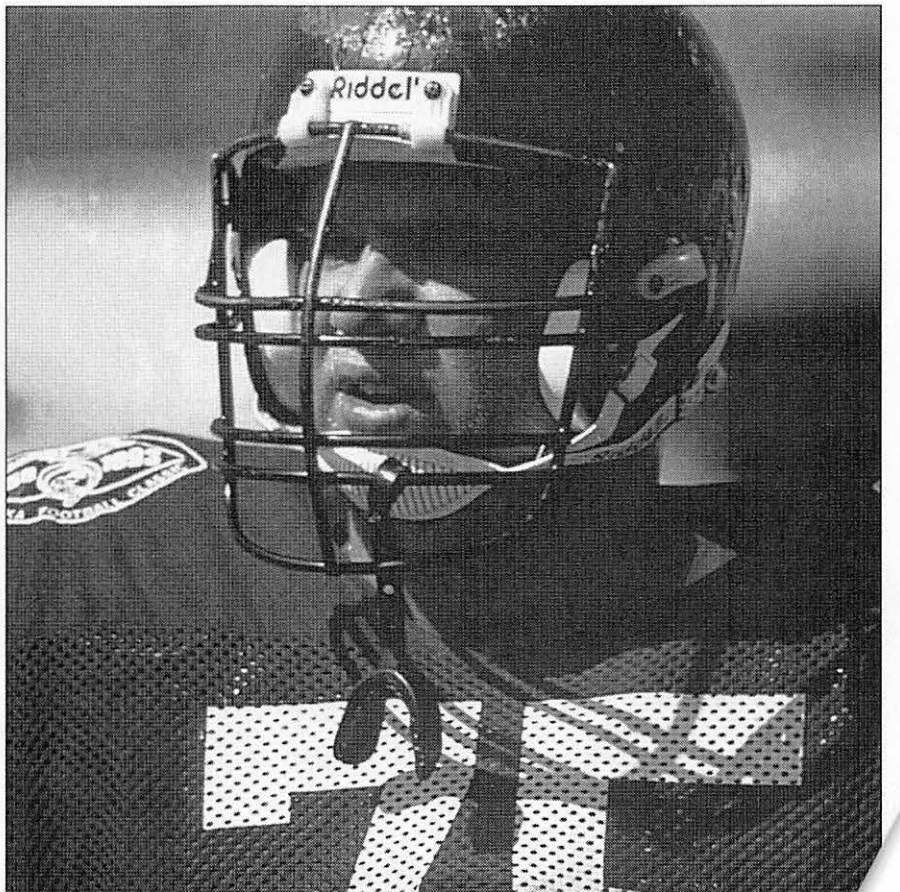
Defensively, outside linebacker Sean Noster, linebacker Justin Stephens and defensive tackle Jason Peter could have a tough time cracking the top three this spring.

Kicker Shane Wells will battle for the job to replace Byron Bennett.

"We have quite a few players who will step in and play for us this year," Gillespie said. "We felt this is was solid class from top to bottom and we still feel this way." ■



Recruited as a fullback, Tim Carpenter (above) will try switching to tight end this spring.



Coaches made a tough decision redshirting Eric Anderson (right) last season. This spring, Anderson is projected to push people for playing time.

Bob Berry



By James Hale

Despite National Opinion, Nebraska Tops Our Big Eight List

The Big Eight has established a reputation as one of the top football conferences in the country. In an effort to maintain that monster reputation, top-notch football coaching staffs at each school scour the countryside looking for the nation's top prep football talent in a ritual known as recruiting.

Some coaches love recruiting. Some hate it. But make no mistake about it, to stay in the college football profession they all must succeed at it.

This year the Big Eight landed 21 players thought to be prep All-Americans by many recruiting services. Nebraska signed one of the top 22 players in the country according to *USA Today* in Webb City, Mo., outside linebacker Grant Wistrom (6-foot-5, 230, 4.6). Oklahoma landed *BlueChip Illustrated's* Midlands Defensive Player of the Year in Norman, Okla., noseguard Dustin Loveless (6-2, 300, 4.8).

Those are two of the headliners to ink with Big Eight schools, but there are many more.

Many of the various recruiting services picked Colorado as the overall conference winner based on signees listed high on many of their own lists. But we have gone out on a limb and put the Huskers at the top of our poll.

RANKING THE BIG EIGHT

1	NEBRASKA
2	COLORADO
3	OKLAHOMA
4	OKLAHOMA ST.
5	KANSAS
6	KANSAS ST.
7	MISSOURI
8	IOWA ST.

Why? We look beyond statistics and what schools recruited who. While Nebraska may not have landed as many nationally known players, Tom Osborne and staff have an uncanny knack of turning unknowns into All-American candidates and national title contending teams.

Nebraska once again recruited on a national basis and landed prospects from California, Minnesota, Texas, Iowa, New Jersey, Arkansas and Louisiana.

The Huskers may have found their Trev Alberts clone in Wistrom, who chose NU over Michigan. Wistrom racked up 122 tackles this past season.

From California, the Huskers landed headliners such as safety Tray Crayton (6-2, 195, 4.5) of Oceanside (El Camino), offensive lineman Constantine Dumitrescu (6-5, 300, 5.0) of Hayward (Moreau), tight end Sheldon Jackson (6-3, 205, 4.6) of Diamond Bar (Damien) and tight end Dorrick Roy (6-4, 220, 4.6) of Inglewood (Montclair Prep). All were highly touted and heavily recruited.

In Minnesota, the Huskers landed wingback Jay Foreman (6-3, 195, 4.5) of Eden Prairie. He's the son of former Minnesota Viking great Chuck Foreman.

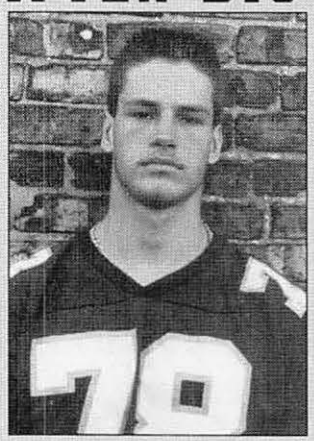
All-American Jason Wiltz (6-4, 280, 4.9) of New Orleans (St. Augustine), La., was rated as one of the top five defensive tackles in the country.

The Buffaloes have become one of the nation's dominant recruiting teams, bringing in talent from all over the country. This season the Buffs' recruiting took them from in state to Texas, Tennessee, Michigan, California, Illinois, Oklahoma and Florida.

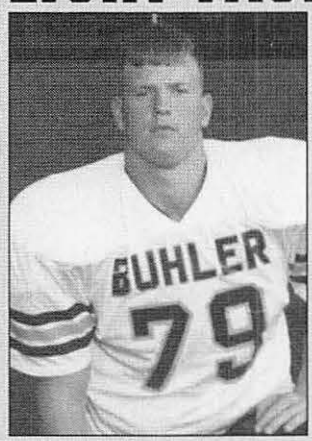
One of the main priorities for the Buffs was at running back with only

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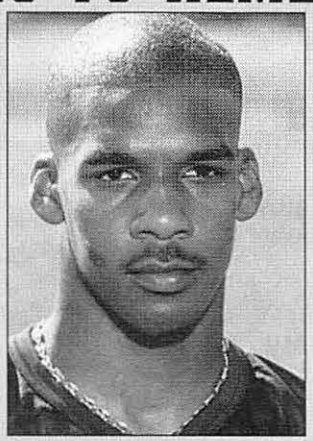
A FEW BIG EIGHT FACES TO REMEMBER



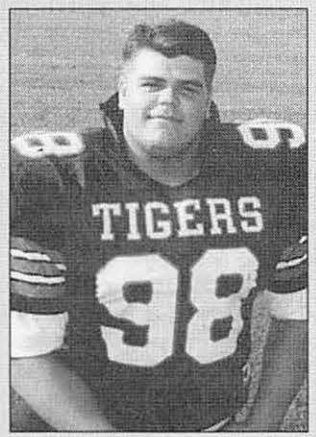
Aaron Marshall of Chicago, Ill., was one of two prep All-America defensive linemen signed by Colorado.



Offensive lineman Cleve Roberts of Butler, Kan., could see action early in the Jayhawk rotation.



Oklahoma got its quarterback replacement in junior college transfer Garrick McGee.



Dusty Loveless could be the piece the Sooners have been missing for years in their defensive line.

RECRUITING SERVICES STILL DOWN ON NU

Just when Nebraska appeared to have finally won over the national naysayers with its strong showing in the 1994 Orange Bowl along came recruiting season. With that came the critics, again.

Though Nebraska maintains it signed a solid class despite the new restrictions placed on all Division I-A schools by the NCAA, many "recruiting experts" felt the Huskers finished well below expectations.

"They did a good job, but not as good as you would expect when they came within a couple of points of a national title," said Tom Lemming, who produces his own recruiting guide. "It's not a knockout class, but there are a lot of good players."

Nebraska, working from maybe the smallest field of in-state athletes it's had to pick from in Osborne's tenure, signed 20 quality players overall. Only four in-state players were offered Division I-A scholarships. Three inked with Nebraska.

The Huskers received their 20th signature almost two weeks after the national signing day (February 2) when Erik Nelson of Iowa City, Iowa opted for Nebraska. Nelson, a 6-foot-3, 246 pound second-team all state offensive lineman, chose the Huskers over Kansas State, Oregon State and Iowa.

"When I was leaving Nebraska after my visit, my host (defensive tackle Dwayne Harris) told me, 'Think about it, Copper Bowl or the Orange Bowl,'" said Nelson, whose dad played at Iowa. "The Cornhuskers are always winners. I think they will continue to win the Big Eight for at least the next three years."

The way to win Big Eight titles is with solid recruiting, which Nebraska faithfully does each year. But yet, despite its success, Nebraska is usually lucky to show up in the top 15 of many of the recruiting polls. This year Lemming placed the Huskers near the bottom of his top 30 and *Bluechip Illustrated* ranked Nebraska No. 20 (17th if you don't count three ties higher in the poll).

Interestingly enough, although Nebraska is notoriously shown little respect in these polls, it constantly finishes in the final Associated Press polls. What happened to the schools ranked higher?

"Everybody was real close this year," said Rick Kimbrel, editor for *Bluechip Illustrated*. "We ranked Nebraska below Oklahoma and Colorado (tied at 13th). If a couple of players Nebraska recruited make their grades and if they get Amp Campbell (who had still not decided on a school at press time) they could easily pass their Big Eight opponents.

"The key in ranking these classes is always how they (the players) develop. It's not what one guy in California says. It's how the coaches develop them."

Nebraska has proven it can do that.

Despite only being ranked higher than No. 15 once in the last four years by *Bluechip Illustrated*, the Huskers have won three straight conference titles.

"The job Nebraska does is nothing short of miraculous," Kimbrel said. "No one can say anything different. Tom Osborne is a fabulous coach and great technician.

"His weight training methods were years ahead of his time. He constantly turns out NFL players with classes that don't rank necessarily high. If that happened only once it would be lucky."

While Nebraska wasn't able to knock teams like Tennessee (a consensus No. 1 in many of the recruiting polls), Southern Cal and Florida State out of their coveted positions atop the charts, it was able to bring in some players that many expect big things from. That includes the "recruiting experts."

"The Huskers' harvest always produces an interesting indigenous talent," Kimbrel said. "Nebraska always seems to turn one of their home state stars that no one has ever heard about into the next Outland Trophy winner. The next in line for that honor may be offensive lineman Brandt Wade.

"But if Wade isn't the next future Outland nominee it could be offensive lineman Constantine Dumitrescu."

Other recruits that have many in the recruiting world salivating over are everyone's prep All-American outside linebacker Grant Wistrom, defensive lineman Jason Wiltz, tight end Sheldon Jackson and defensive back/wingback Shevin Wiggins.

"Shevin Wiggins will be a lot like Ty Goode (in-state recruit who signed with Notre Dame) if he plays offense," Kimbrel said. "We got more than a few calls about how good he is. Grades are a concern, but if he can pass — watch out.

"Goode was a big fish in a little pond, but Wiggins was a big fish in a big lake."

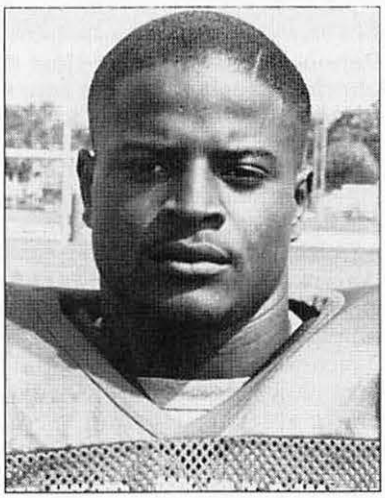
Nebraska, who does not traditionally recruit junior college players heavily, landed what many consider the best talent at that level in I-back Brian Knuckles.

"Husker fans are going to be happy with this one. Knuckles is proven," Lemming said. "Most schools don't rank junior college kids high because they are simply the best of another group of athletes.

"Knuckles was great on the first level (high school). He could end up being the best in this class."

A class that will once again exceed expectations placed on it by those outside the university. ■

— By Chris Greer



Some recruiting services believe I-back Brian Knuckles (below) could end up being the best recruit in the 1994 class.

BLUECHIP ILLUSTRATED'S TOP 20

1)	TENNESSEE	10 TIE)	STANFORD
2)	USC		UCLA
3)	FLORIDA STATE	11)	NORTH CAROLINA
4 TIE)	OHIO STATE	12)	FLORIDA
	MICHIGAN	13 TIE)	OKLAHOMA
5)	NOTRE DAME		COLORADO
6)	ALABAMA	14)	BOSTON COLLEGE
7)	MIAMI	15)	TEXAS
8)	TEXAS A&M	16)	LOUISIANA STATE
9)	GEORGIA	17)	NEBRASKA



Early Bravado Turns To Reality For Men's Gymnastic Team

These are uncertain times for the sport of men's gymnastics as far as the National Collegiate Athletic Association is concerned. Because of the dwindling number of member institutions sponsoring the sport, the April 22-23 national meet in Lincoln might be the final men's championship meet to have NCAA sponsorship.

Uncertain times indeed.

But when you are talking about the NCAA men's gymnastics season, one thing is almost always a certainty — Nebraska coach Francis Allen will tout his Huskers as being the team to beat for the men's national team crown.

This man knows a lot about what it takes for a team to emerge at the top of the heap at the end of the season. In his 25th season as head coach at Nebraska, Allen has guided his team to seven NCAA titles.

And before this season began, Allen, as usual, was predicting a national championship for his team. Can you imagine the reaction if the Huskers' football coach, the stoic Tom Osborne, began each season predicting a title?

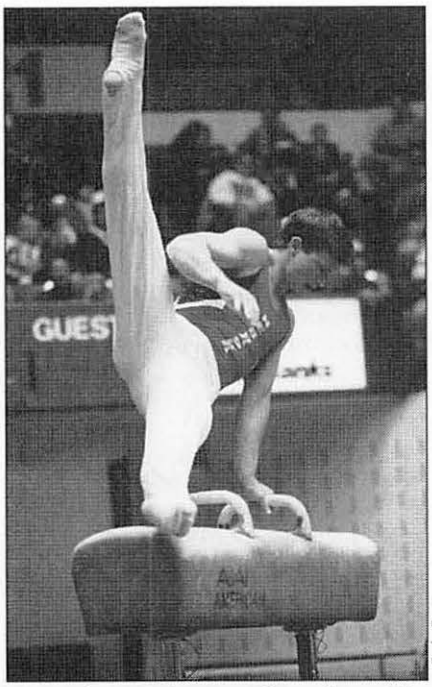
Before this season began, Allen said Nebraska would approach the regular- season competitions differently than it approached last year's meets. He said the approach would lead to a title.

"It's a long ride until April, so we're going to beat everybody nice and easy and then kick butt at the national finals, unlike last year, when we kicked everybody's butt all year, and then I didn't do a good job of getting them ready for the championships."

Nebraska established itself as the team to beat at nationals last April in Albuquerque, N.M., when it easily won the qualifying portion of the meet. But the teams started from scratch the next day, and Stanford captured the title with a 276.5 total, a full point higher than Nebraska, which was shooting for its first team title since 1990.

Stanford also beat runner-up Nebraska for the crown in the 1992 ·et in Lincoln.

· year, Allen touted his team est Husker squad ever. It



Bob Berry

Dennis Harrison, a five-time All-American, feels there's a sense of urgency with this year's team.

rolled through the regular season unbeaten, winning its final regular-season test, at New Mexico, by scoring 288.2, the best regular-season score in school history and the second-best score by Nebraska in any competition.

Nebraska then won the Big Eight Championships and the NCAA West Regional. The Huskers scored 286.525 to easily win the preliminary round of the NCAA Championships, and it looked like they would cruise to their eighth crown.

But for the NCAA team finals, the judging was switched to a 9.0 base score, lower than the standard 9.5, and it threw the Huskers out of whack. The Cardinal, however, prospered.

This season, Nebraska, which returned seven gymnasts, has not dominated its foes like it did a year ago. On Feb. 19 in a triangular at Norman, Okla., then No. 2-ranked Oklahoma handed then-No. 3 Nebraska its first loss in dual or triangular competition since 1992 by scoring 283.95 points to the Huskers' 280.25. Iowa State was third at 255.3.

Allen said after the loss that the Huskers might have been affected by the gymnasts' decision to perform strength drills in 6:30 a.m. workouts. The Huskers still had their regular practices in the afternoon.

Allen said the morning workouts were the gymnasts' idea, and they work out on their own, without the coaches.

"I guess they just want to be better," Allen said.

It didn't make them better in Norman.

"They were sore. But if we have to lose one meet because of that workout schedule, it's OK, because it will help us in the long run."

Nebraska senior Sumner Darling said unlike the last two years, the Huskers are gearing their training regimen toward only a few big meets, most notably the NCAA meet at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.

They hope to be razor sharp April 22-23 for nationals, when Allen expects Stanford and Ohio State to be Nebraska's main competition for the team title. Allen said Oklahoma has surprised him with its strength this season, and he said the Sooners should not be counted out.

It is easy to see why Allen is confident about his squad's chances. The Huskers' team depth can match — or top — that of any team in the nation. If Nebraska can overcome several nagging injuries, an eighth title is a definite possibility.

Dennis Harrison, senior, is a five-time All-American and Nissen


Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

Award candidate. At last year's NCAA meet, he earned two All-America honors with a third-place finish in the all-around and a sixth-place finish on the parallel bars. He finished second in the all-around at the NCAA West Regional.

Before the season, Harrison talked about a sense of urgency that he felt in the Nebraska practice gym, located in the bowels of the Devaney Sports Center. "I think there's a sense of urgency from everyone on the team," Harrison said. "If you think about it, Nebraska's chances next year could be slim, depending on the recruits. This is the best shot for a title there will be for a while."

Senior Che Bowers was the 1992 NCAA Pommel Horse champion and is still one of the nation's most talented — and elegant — performers in the event. Chronic shoulder soreness has limited Bowers this season. At last year's NCAA meet, he finished second on the high bar with a 9.5 and third on the pommel horse with a 9.4.

Entering the season, Bowers summed up his feelings rather succinctly.

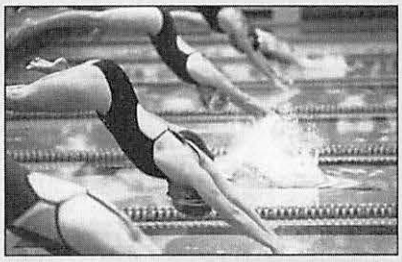
"Right now, all I am concerned about is getting this team a national championship in my senior season," Bowers said.

Allen's glad to hear that. ■

SWIMMING AND DIVING TEAMS SWEEP BIG EIGHT CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Nebraska swimming and diving team swept the Big Eight Conference titles for both the men and women. The Husker men won their 15th straight championship by outdistancing Kansas 652.5 to 596. Cal Bentz was named the men's Coach of the Year after leading his team to victory.

The women came from behind on the final day to also defeat the Jayhawks, 662 to 643. KU was the defending champion and meet favorite. Heading into the final day of competition, the women trailed the Jayhawks by 13 points, but Nebraska won championships in all six events to come away with the 19 point win.



The women captured their first conference title since 1991.

Senior co-captain Jonathan Kerr led his team for the third day winning the 200 backstroke in an NCAA consideration time of 1:47.62. NU's Chris Ford finished fourth in the event.

Kerr, a native of Edinburgh, Scotland, was named the men's outstanding performer following his individual championships in the 200 and 400 individual medleys.

Nebraska freshman Conny Wennberg was selected as the men's newcomer of the year after winning the 200 backstroke in an NCAA qualifying time of 1:59.13. His time also set big Eight meet and pool records.

Melanie Dodd, Jane Glazebrook and Penny Heynes all set NCAA qualifying times as they led the women to their first conference title since 1991. Dodd, a sophomore, won the 100 freestyle for the second-straight year with a time of 50.19. She also swam a leg of the Huskers' winning 400 freestyle relay team, which set a new Big Eight meet record.

Glazebrook won the 200 backstroke in a meet and pool record time of 1:58.19.

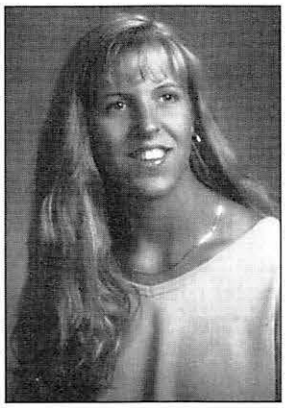
The women's outstanding performer was sophomore Penny Heyns, who won the 200 breaststroke with a clocking of 2:13.93. ■

PETTIT INKS TWO STATE STARS

The Nebraska volleyball team made its first significant move to reload when it signed two state Player of the Year winners. Inking with the Huskers were Stacie Maser of Lincoln, Neb. and Lisa Reitsma of Hull, Iowa.

Maser, a 6-foot middle blocker, led Lincoln Northeast to the semifinals of the state tournament. An all-around athlete, Maser is the school's recordholder in the 100 and 200 yard freestyle and is a high jumper on the Rockets' track team. She made an oral commitment to Nebraska last fall before beginning her senior season.

"We are certainly pleased to have Stacie sign with us," said head coach Terry Pettit. "One of our goals is to always have the best player in the state come to Nebraska. She grew up with Nebraska volleyball and we believe that she is ready to meet the challenge of collegiate volleyball.



Nebraska Player of the Year Stacie Maser has signed with Huskers.

"She has the ability to play any of the three positions (right, left and middle) and should compete for significant playing time as a freshman."

Reitsma, a 6-3 (left-handed) rightside hitter, led her team to the Iowa state championship, was named the MVP of the state tournament and was also the MVP of the Iowa All-Star game. She chose Nebraska over Penn State, Iowa, Iowa State and Texas.

"Since Lisa hasn't had the opportunity to play as much USVBA (United States Volleyball Association), she doesn't have as much volleyball experience as Stacie," Pettit said. "She is an exceptional athlete and is capable of playing anywhere on the front row. She has a very quick arm and at her size, there are very few athletes that move as well as she does.

"She has the potential to be a significant player."

Nebraska finished last season 23-6 and made its 11th-straight appearance in the NCAA Tournament.

"We have eight or nine athletes returning that had significant playing time last season, with five starters in that group. We felt that we should go after the best athletes we could find," Pettit said. "We believe that both freshman will fit into our system. They are typical Nebraska volleyball players."

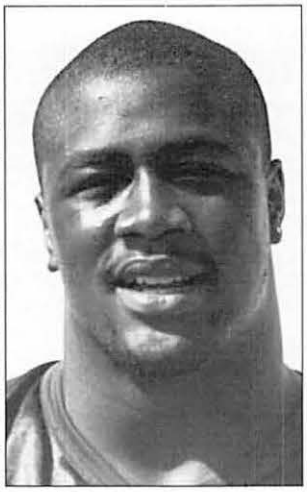
The Huskers lost Nikki Stricker and Laura Luther from last year's squad due to graduation. Kim Tonniges was granted a medical hardship, but Pettit said "in all likelihood, that scholarship will be saved." ■

Rashaan Salaam left on campus.

After a slow start the Buffs closed in spectacular fashion by signing four outstanding running backs.

Heading the list is Marlon Barnes (5-10, 190, 4.4), a flashy scat-back from Memphis (Millington Central), Tenn., who rushed for 1,737 yards and 23 touchdowns as a senior.

Rafael Cooper (5-9, 185, 4.4) of Detroit (Chadsey), Mich., managed 1,360 yards, at (8.3 yards per carry) and eight scores. Lendon Henry (6-1, 200, 4.5) of Port Arthur (Jefferson), Texas and Herchell Troutman (5-8, 185, 4.5) of Naples (Barron Collier), Fla., will add to the tremendous competition in the backfield this fall.



The Cowboys once again stocked up on junior college talent and the best of the bunch may be defensive lineman Demetrius Crowder, who should start.

The Buffs plan to go from their one-back set to an H-back look that was so popular with the Washington Redskins this past season.

Leon Merritt (6-3, 235, 4.6) of Detroit (Henry Ford), Mich., and Clifton Peters (6-3, 220, 4.5) of Pauls Valley, Okla., are great athletes who can handle the versatility of the H-back position.

The Buffs also added to their always strong receiving corps with All-America wide receiver Chris Anderson (6-4, 210, 4.5) of LaPorte, Texas.

On defense the Buffs landed some of the nation's top talent.

Elton Davis (5-9, 185, 4.5) of Boulder, Colo., is a *SuperPrep* All-American who will contend for a starting spot early in his career.

Along the defensive line Colorado signed All-Americans Mike Lorentz (6-4, 265, 5.0) of Thornton, Colo., and Aaron Marshall (6-4, 220, 4.7) of Chicago (Lane Tech), Ill.

In Norman, Oklahoma desperately needed a quarterback to replace the graduated Cale Gundy. The Sooners landed the junior college transfer they wanted in Garrick McGee (6-4, 190, 4.5) of Northeastern A&M, Okla. McGee has Division-I starting experience at Arizona State and will provide immediate help.

McGee should have plenty of targets to pass to next season, including ... tight end the Sooners signed in ... Alexander (6-6, 230, 4.6) of ..., Okla.

...nder was the *SuperPrep* National Player of the Year and a second-team *USA Today* All-American. With Rickey Brady lost to graduation, Alexander may have a chance to step in and start immediately.

Also signing on to bolster the Sooner offense were Jay Smith (6-5, 270, 5.0) of Arlington (Lamar), Texas, who was rated as the top offensive line prospect in the Lone Star State; Michael Rose (6-0, 215, 4.5) of Abilene (Coo-per), Texas, who was listed among the top 10 running backs in the state; and Jermaine Fazande (6-1, 245, 4.6) of Marrero (Ehret), La., who is an honest to goodness fullback.

However, the bulk of the Oklahoma class was recruited for defense. Martin Chase (6-3, 280, 5.0) of Lawton (Eisenhower), Okla., and Carlos Baker (6-5 250, 4.9) of Frederick, Okla., are prep All-Americans.

Inside linebackers were a must in this class and the Sooners signed an excellent prospect in Corey Ivy (6-3, 225, 4.6) of Crandall, Texas. Ivy was one of the top 10 talents in Texas.

OU also reloaded in the secondary with a star-studded group that includes Chris Blocker (6-2, 185, 4.5) of Houston (Booker T. Washington), Texas; Terrance White (6-0, 180, 4.4) of Aldine (Nimitz), Texas; and Cedric Stephens (5-11, 180, 4.38) of Dallas (Carter), Texas.

Add junior college transfer Tim Denton (6-0, 180, 4.5) of Blinn, Texas, and the Sooners have one of the top defensive back classes in the country.

Oklahoma State coach Pat Jones recruited his best class in five years.

Once again the Pokes landed an All-America running back at the last minute. Andre Richardson (5-9, 170, 4.4) of Dallas (Carter), Texas committed very early to Tennessee but soon wavered and landed in Stillwater. This past season Richardson rushed for 2,639 yards and 39 touchdown.

Quarterbacks Craig Strickland (6-2, 180, 4.8) of Midwest City (Carl Albert), Okla., and Travis Hartfield (6-2, 195, 4.5) of Watonga, Okla., give the Cowboys quality depth at a normally thin position.

OSU is also excited about wide receiver Tim McNeal (6-3, 190, 4.45) of Dallas (Bishop Dunne), Texas, who is a big play waiting to happen.

On defense All-American Jamal Williams (6-3, 265, 4.7) of Washington, D.C. (Archbishop Carroll) brings another banner talent from that part of the country to Stillwater.

Junior college standouts Alamu Bailey (6-1, 265, 4.6) of Fort Scott, Kan., and James Elliott (6-0, 235, 4.6) of Garden City, Kan., should play immediately at inside linebacker.

Demetrius Crowder (6-3, 255, 4.8) of Northeastern A&M (Okla.) will be expected to step right into the starting lineup on the defensive line, while Greg Ivy (6-0, 190) of Navarro (Texas) Junior College will punt.

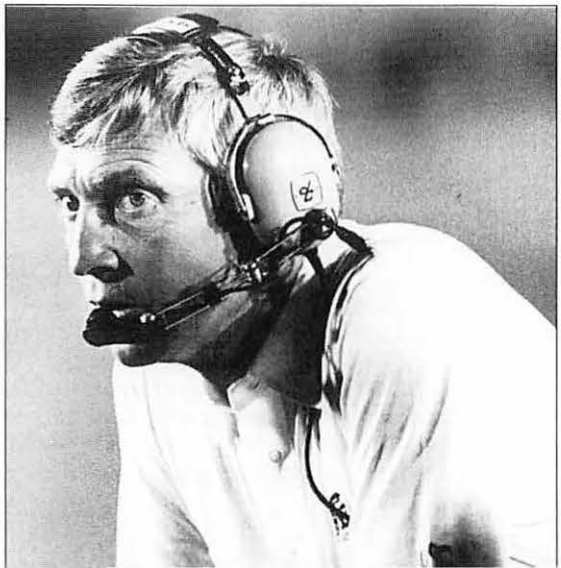
Glen Mason continues to recharge the Kansas program. The Jayhawks have made great strides during the past couple of years and will continue in that direction with an excellent class in 1994.

All-America running back Eric Vann (5-9, 185, 4.4) of El Dorado, Kan., decided to stay home and play for the Jayhawks after rushing for 1,669 yards and 22 touchdowns as a senior.

Offensive lineman Cleve Roberts (6-5, 270, 5.0) of Butler, Kan., is another outstanding talent who could also help early.

The Jayhawks needed immediate help in the defensive line and raided the junior college ranks to find it.

Brett McGraw (6-1, 260, 5.0) of



New Missouri coach Larry Smith (right) got a late start and it hurt.

Garden City (Kan.) Community College will work inside, while Troy Harper (6-4, 275, 5.0) of Taft (Calif.) Community College may line up at defensive end along with Alani Pahulu (6-5, 280, 5.0) of Ricks (Idaho) Junior College.

Two other highly regarded KU signees are linebacker Steve Bratten (6-1, 213, 4.6) of Arvada (Pomona), Calif., and quarterback Brian Gray (6-4, 205, 4.7) of Liberty, Mo.

Kansas State went out of state to land its best prospect. Lineman Jerome Evans (6-5, 275, 4.9) of Waco (University), Texas, is a great talent who, if he can meet academic requirements, has All-America potential. Among the schools interested in Evans were Oklahoma, Texas and Texas A&M.

Joseph Haynes (6-1, 300, 5.0) of Kansas City (Van Horne), Kan., is another defensive line talent who comes with great credentials.

Ray Eagle (6-4, 295, 5.0) of Garden City (Kan.) Community College is a junior college All-American who should provide immediate help.

In the defensive backfield the Wildcats were looking to replace one of the nation's best secondaries. Marlon Charles (5-10, 180, 4.4) of Kansas City (Hickman Mills), Mo., comes with All-America credentials. Gordon Brown (5-8, 160, 4.4) of Bradenton (Hutchinson), Fla., has great cover skills at corner and David Conley (6-3, 195, 4.5) of St. Louis (McCluer North), Mo., has good range at free safety.

Jimmy Dean (5-10, 190, 4.4) of Butler (Kan.) Community College is an electrifying receiver who, before his career is over, will be catching passes from quarterback Todd Miller (6-2, 195, 4.7) of Manhattan, Kan.

New Missouri head coach Larry Smith got off to a late start, which hurt the Tigers in this recruiting class.

Wide receiver Maurice Daniels (5-10, 190, 4.5) of Kansas City (Raytown South), Mo., could end up at cornerback, but no matter where he plays, he brings excellent athletic skills. Daniels rushed for 1,200 yards and caught 45 passes as a prep phenom. He is also great sprinter who boasts a 10.4 time in the 100 meters and a 21.8 mark in the 200 meters.

Other key additions for the Tigers are Kenyetta Williams (5-10, 190, 4.5) of St. Louis (Vashon), Mo., who is MU's top running back recruit, and Kent Skornia (6-4, 185, 4.7) of Washington (St. Francis Borgia), Mo., who was an all-state quarterback after throwing for 2,108 yards and 31 touchdowns this past season.

Once again Jim Walden's Cyclones brought in a class not loaded with nationally known names. This is always the case with Iowa State as it struggles to fine tune its Wishbone offense.

Quarterbacks Robert Richardson (5-9, 165, 4.5) of Dallas (Lincoln), Texas, and Corey Lambert (5-11, 205, 4.5) of Marrero (Ehret), La., are excellent option operators. Halfbacks Bryan Rubin (5-9, 170, 4.5) of Rialt, Calif., and Troy Davis (5-9, 170, 4.4) of Miami (Southridge), Fla., bring excellent speed to the corners.

The Cyclones felt they couldn't cover in the secondary a year ago so they overloaded in the defensive backfield.

Dawan Anderson (5-9, 170, 4.4) of Hazelcrest (Hillcrest), Ill., Leapher "Red" Castleberry (6-2, 190, 4.5) of Miami Springs, Fla., and Kevin Hudson (6-0, 175, 4.5) of Miami (South Dade), Fla., are excellent talents who can defend against the pass.

However, ISU missed out on players in the downlines. ■

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